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SAM, I AM

Uncle Sams Fred Polnisch and Gordon Dunham greet each other before the Fourth of July Parade, Thursday July 4, 2019, in the Pittsfield, Mass.

Associated Press

Parades, parties, pomp and circumstance fill Fourth of July



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Trump asks Americans to 'stay true to our cause'

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE,
CALVIN WOODWARD and
LYNN BERRY

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump celebrated "the greatest political journey in human history" Thursday in a Fourth of July commemoration before a soggy, cheering crowd of spectators, many of them invited, on the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial. Supporters welcomed his tribute to the U.S. military while protesters assailed him for putting himself center stage on a holiday devoted to unity.

Trump called on Americans to "stay true to our cause" in a program that adhered to patriotic themes and hailed an eclectic mix of history's heroes, from the armed forces, space, civil rights and other endeavors of American life.

He largely stuck to his script, avoiding diversions into his agenda or re-election campaign. But in one exception, he vowed, "Very soon, we will plant the American flag on Mars," actually a distant goal not



President Donald Trump speaks during an Independence Day celebration in front of the Lincoln Memorial, Thursday, July 4, 2019, in Washington.

Associated Press

likely to be achieved until late in the 2020s if even then.

A late afternoon downpour drenched the capital's Independence Day crowds and presaged an evening of possible on-and-off storms. But Trump's speech unfolded in occasional rain, and the war-

planes and presidential aircraft he had summoned conducted their flyovers as planned, capped by the Navy Blue Angels aerobatics team.

By adding his own, one-hour "Salute to America" production to capital festivities that typically draw hundreds of thousands anyway, Trump became the first president in nearly seven decades to address a crowd at the National Mall on Independence Day.

Protesters objecting to what they saw as his co-opting of the holiday inflated a roly-poly balloon depicting Trump as an angry, diaper-clad baby.

Trump set aside a historic piece of real estate — a stretch of the Mall from the Lincoln Monument to the midpoint of the reflecting pool — for a mix of invited military members, Republican and Trump campaign donors and other bigwigs. It's where Martin Luther King Jr. gave his "I have a dream" speech, Barack Obama and Trump held inaugural concerts and protesters swarmed into the water when supporters of Richard Nixon put on a July 4, 1970, celebration, with the president sending taped remarks from California.

Aides to the crowd-obsessed Trump fretted about

he's prone to tantrums, he doesn't understand the consequences of his actions. And so this is a great symbol of how we feel about our president."

The balloon remained tied down at the Mall because park officials restricted the group's permission to move it or fill it with helium, Benjamin said.

Protesters also handed out small Trump-baby balloons on sticks. Molly King of La Porte, Indiana, a 13-year-old Trump supporter in sunglasses and a "Make America Great Again" hat, happily came away with one.

"They're making a big stink about it but it's actually pretty cute," she said.

"I mean, why not love your president as you'd love a baby?"

A small crowd gathered to take pictures with the big balloon, which drew Trump supporters and detractors.

"Even though everybody has different opinions," said Kevin Malton, a Trump supporter from Middlesboro, Kentucky, "everybody's getting along."

But Daniela Guray, a 19-year-old from Chicago who held a "Dump Trump" sign, said she was subjected to a racial epithet while walking along the Constitution Avenue parade route and told to go home.

She said she did not come to the Mall to protest but ended up doing so. "I started seeing all the tanks with all the protests and that's when I said, 'Wait, this is not an actual Fourth of July,'" she said. "Trump is making it his day rather than the Fourth of July."

"We own the planes, we have the pilots, the airport is right next door (Andrews), all we need is the fuel," he said, referring to Maryland's Joint Base Andrews, home for some of the planes expected for the holiday flyover. "We own the tanks and all. Fireworks are donated by two of the greats."

Trump glossed over the expense of shipping tanks and fighting vehicles to Washington by rail and guarding them for several days, and other costs. □

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We have a wiener! Joey Chestnut eats 71 hot dogs for title

By ALI SWENSON

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Joey "Jaws" Chestnut ate 71 wieners and buns to secure his 12th title at Nathan's Famous annual July Fourth hot dog eating contest on Thursday, just a few hot dogs shy of breaking the record he set last year. In front of a crowd of fans and facing 17 opponents, the California native far exceeded his nearest competitors, but didn't quite make or pass the 74-dog mark he reached in 2018. When asked how he felt after the contest, Chestnut, 35, said, "I feel like I should eat a couple more."

"I knew it was going to be close. I was trying hard and I was overstuffing my mouth and it wasn't going down," he said. "I just needed to find a way to move a little bit faster. I think it's getting harder the older I get."

Miki Sudo won the women's competition by chomping down 31 hot dogs.



Joey Chestnut reacts after winning the men's competition of Nathan's Famous July Fourth hot dog eating contest, Thursday, July 4, 2019, in New York's Coney Island.

The 33-year-old fell short of her total last year of 37 frankfurters but earned her sixth consecutive title by easily beating runner-up Michelle Lesco, who wolfed down 26 hot dogs.

Like Chestnut, she expressed some disappointment in not eating more. "It wasn't my best number, the numbers were pretty low across the board. I don't know if it was the

heat, but I really can't complain. I wasn't feeling in my best shape so I'm just glad that it was enough to pull off a sixth belt," she said. Sonya "The Black Widow" Thomas holds the all-time

women's record of 45 hot dogs in 10 minutes.

Chestnut and Sudo will each take home \$10,000. Spectators with foam hot dog hats, plastic noisemakers and homemade signs descended on Coney Island's famed boardwalk for the contest.

The annual eat-off started in 1972, though the company has long promoted the event with a theatrical backstory that places its start date in 1916.

Chestnut has only lost once since 2007, when he pulled ahead of longtime foe Takeru Kobayashi for the first time. An ESPN documentary released Tuesday features the two former rivals and their extreme training regimens. "It's not something that there's books written about," Chestnut says in the film, which shows him lifting his head up and down with a weight dangling from his mouth. "There's not trainers. Everything's trial and error." □

Associated Press

Michigan Rep. Justin Amash quitting Republican Party

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Rep. Justin Amash of Michigan, the only Republican in Congress to call for impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump, said Thursday he is leaving the GOP because he has become disenchanted with partisan politics and “frightened by what I see from it.”

In an opinion article published in the Washington Post, on July 4, Amash said partisan politics is damaging American democracy. “I am declaring my independence and leaving the Republican Party,” Amash said. “I’m asking you to join me in rejecting the partisan loyalties and rhetoric that divide and dehumanize us.” Amash had been the only Republican in Congress to say Trump engaged in impeachable conduct, drawing the ire of many fellow Republicans and Trump. In a series of tweets on May 18, Amash said that he had read special counsel Robert Mueller’s report on Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election. “Mueller’s



In this June 12, 2019 file photo, Rep. Justin Amash, R-Mich., listens to debate as the House Oversight and Reform Committee considers whether to hold Attorney General William Barr and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross in contempt for failing to turn over subpoenaed documents related to the Trump administration's decision to add a citizenship question to the 2020 census, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

ler’s report reveals that President Trump engaged in specific actions and a pattern of behavior that meet the threshold for impeachment,” Amash said at the time. He was roundly criticized by fellow Republicans and withdrew from the Freedom Caucus of conservatives in Congress after the group disavowed his views. Amash had filed in February for re-election in 2020 as a Republican in a race that has since drawn three primary challengers, his first intra-party challenge since 2014. Amash’s chief of staff, Poppy Nelson, said Thursday that Amash plans to run as an independent. Amash told WOOD-TV at a Grand Rapids parade on Thursday after announcing that he was leaving the party that he intended to “set an example.” “People need to stand up for what’s right, stand up for what they believe in and be independent of these party loyalties that really divide us,” he said. At a town hall in Michigan after he an-

nounced his support for impeachment proceedings, Amash cited a section of the Mueller report that suggested Trump had told former White House counsel Don McGahn to create a “false record” denying he had asked for Mueller’s removal as special counsel. “Things like that to me reflect incredible dishonesty and really harm the office of the presidency. I don’t think that you can just let that stuff go,” Amash told his constituents. “I think you have to have proceedings to deter this kind of conduct even if ultimately the person is not convicted.” Under the Constitution, the House has the power to begin impeachment proceedings and the Senate would decide whether to convict. Trump responded immediately to Amash’s announcement that he is quitting the GOP, tweeting Thursday: “Great news for the Republican Party as one of the dumbest & most disloyal men in Congress is ‘quitting’ the Party.” Trump called Amash a “total loser.” Amash said he in the op-ed he is trying to escape a “hyperpartisan environment.” “The parties value winning for its own sake, and at whatever cost,” Amash wrote. “Instead of acting as an independent branch of government and serving as a check on the executive branch, congressional leaders of both parties expect the House and Senate to act in obedience or opposition to the president and their colleagues on a partisan basis.” Amash, whose voting record in Congress is considered libertarian-leaning, has represented Michigan’s 3rd Congressional district in the western part of the state since 2011. □

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ONLINE****MAD magazine leaving newsstands after 67-year run (Really!)**

By RACHEL LERMAN

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — MAD, the long-running satirical magazine that influenced everyone from "Weird Al" Yankovic to the writers of "The Simpsons," will be leaving newsstands after its August issue. Really. The illustrated humor magazine — instantly recognizable by the gap-toothed smiling face of mascot Alfred E. Neuman — will still be available in comic shops and through mail to subscribers. But after its fall issue it will just reprint previously published material.

The only new material will come in special editions at the end of the year.

DC, the division of Warner Brothers that publishes the magazine, said MAD will pull from nostalgic cartoons and parodies published over the magazine's 67-year run.

As Neuman would say, "What, me worry?" Worry not, for MAD has more than 550 issues packed full of political parodies and edgy humor to pull from.

The magazine set itself apart as a cultural beacon for decades with its unabashed tendency to make fun of anything and push conventional boundaries. One of MAD's best known comic series, Spy vs. Spy, featured two spies with beak-like faces and big eyes — costumes that are still regularly worn on Halloween.

It even seemingly parodied



In this July 20, 2017 file photo the face of Alfred E. Neuman is framed by attendees at the DC booth during the first day of Comic-Con International at the San Diego Convention Center in San Diego, Calif.

fellow popular magazine Playboy, with its Fold-In feature that appeared in nearly every issue. But instead of featuring scantily-clad models, the Fold-In printed — what else? — another joke. DC will keep publishing MAD special collections and books.

Illustrators and comedians, including one-time guest editor Yankovic, mourned the magazine's effective closure.

"It's pretty much the reason I turned out weird," he wrote on Twitter.

Josh Weinstein, a writer and producer of "The Simpsons" — which has referenced MAD many times

— thanked the magazine

on Twitter for its inspiring effect on eras of comedy.

"There was a moment in so many of our childhoods where you were the greatest thing ever," he wrote. Comedian Harry Shearer, the voice of several characters on "The Simpsons," cracked on Twitter: "An American institution has closed. And who wants to live in an institution?"

When President Donald Trump referred to Democratic presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg as Neuman, while insisting he wouldn't be fit to serve as president, the 37-year-old candidate said he had to Google the reference.

"I guess it's just a genera-

reference."

Cartoonist Evan Dorkin, who worked for MAD, wrote on Twitter that the magazine was long a source of happiness and inspiration for him.

"I hope we provided some smiles to some readers of the past 12 yrs," he wrote. The magazine changed as its circumstances did, he wrote, including when the magazine began printing advertisements in 2001 and when it moved from New York City to Burbank, California, at the end of 2017. That move warped MAD's identity, Dorkin said.

MAD was long a venue for comic artists and cartoonists to grow artistically and shape national conversation. Well-known names such as Al Jaffee, Harvey Kurtzman and Mort Drucker were associated with the magazine for decades. □

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Oklahoma presses opioid case against Johnson & Johnson

By SEAN MURPHY

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. (AP) — So far, Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter has secured about \$355 million from two groups of defendant drugmakers in the state's lawsuit against opioid manufacturers, and he's trying to make the case that even more money should come Oklahoma's way in the first such state case to go to trial.

While Hunter presses the claim that Johnson & Johnson is to blame for Oklahoma's opioid epidemic, he's also facing criticism, some from his own Republican colleagues, about his team's deal making and go-it-alone style.

Because Oklahoma's is the first case to proceed to trial, the litigation and the state's earlier settlements with Oxycontin-maker Purdue Pharma and Israeli-owned Teva Pharmaceuticals are being closely watched, especially with roughly 1,500 similar lawsuits filed by state, local and tribal governments consolidated before a federal judge in Ohio.



In this Wednesday, May 29, 2019 file photo, Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter, center, watches a video deposition with attorneys Michael Burrage, left and Brad Beckworth, right, in Norman, Okla., during Oklahoma's trial against drugmakers blamed for contributing to the opioid crisis.

Some things to know about the trial that began May 28:

JOHNSON & JOHNSON'S CASE:

The New Brunswick, New Jersey-based consumer products giant and its subsidiaries, including Janssen Pharmaceuticals, argue that they participated in a lawful and strictly regulated industry and that their mar-

keted products represent only a tiny fraction of the opioids used in Oklahoma. Johnson & Johnson says that much of the nation's opioid crisis is the result of illegal activity, such as drugs being stolen or fraudulently obtained. John Sparks, the company's Oklahoma counsel, said the state's estimate is wildly overinflated and described Hunter's effort as "a far-reaching odyssey to seek damages disguised as abatement."

OKLAHOMA'S CASE:

Oklahoma claims the companies are responsible for fueling the state's opioid crisis by using an aggressive and misleading marketing campaign that overstated the effectiveness of opioids for treating a broad range of pain, while downplaying addiction risks. Citing Johnson & Johnson subsidiaries that produced the raw materials used to produce the drugs, Hunter last week characterized the defendants as the "kingpin" of an epidemic that has created a generation of addicts and killed nearly 7,000 Oklahoma residents. The state has proposed a \$17.5 billion abatement plan to abate the problem over the next 30 years.

The state rested its case this week after presenting its last witness, a former Johnson & Johnson sales representative.

PUBLIC NUISANCE CLAIM:

Shortly before the start of Oklahoma's trial against the drugmakers, Hunter dropped claims of fraud, unjust enrichment and violations of the state's Medicaid laws, leaving only the allegation that the companies created a public nuisance that must be abated. Experts say Hunter's legal strategy is a unique one and potentially a big gamble. "This is new territory, and even plaintiffs admit that this is not the usual application of public nuisance," said Ausness, who said such claims typically involve interference with the rights of the general public. Hunter himself was critical of cities such as New York and San Francisco using public nuisance claims to abate damage from climate change. In a 2018 editorial, Hunter said such claims were "wanton attempts at jackpot justice in order to fix local deficit problems and set national energy policy."

In defense of his editorial, Hunter said it's "absurd to compare the theory of climate change with the opioid epidemic." He said the opioid epidemic can be curtailed through a focused series of actions, while climate change is a "hypothetical global phenomenon with countless factors and influences."

THE SETTLEMENTS:

The state's \$270 million deal

with Purdue and \$85 million settlement with Teva both faced criticism from lawmakers, who maintained they should be responsible for dispersing funds and were left in the dark on settlement discussions. The Purdue settlement, which calls for about \$200 million to go into a trust to fund an addiction studies center at Oklahoma State University in Tulsa, prompted lawmakers to pass a bill clarifying that any settlement funds go to the state treasury. After the Teva settlement was announced, the Republican governor and legislative leaders argued the deal violated the spirit of the new law and asked to intervene in the case before a mediator was appointed and an agreement reached. The money will go into a special state fund that lawmakers will decide how to spend.

"The Legislature has not changed its position that the money needs to go into the state treasury," said Rep. Jon Echols, R-Oklahoma City. "That's the law, and the state statute is very clear." Echols said putting the money into the state's general revenue fund also gives the state flexibility to deal with situations like the federal government seeking a share of Oklahoma's settlement with Purdue.

THE ATTORNEYS:

Hunter also has faced criticism over the massive fees paid to outside attorneys hired by the state — about \$60 million from Purdue and \$13 million from Teva. But those fees were spelled out in the state's contingency-based contract with outside attorneys, who wouldn't get paid if the state lost. "Experts charge \$1,000 an hour, so it would cost them millions of dollars to try this case," said University of Kentucky law professor Richard Ausness, who has written extensively about opioid litigation. "So it's pretty lucrative if you win, but it's a contingency fee and if you lose, you don't get anything and they will have invested a lot of money in a case like this." □

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Strongest earthquake in 20 years rattles Southern California

By JOHN ANTCZAK and OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The strongest earthquake in 20 years shook a large swath of Southern California and parts of Nevada on Thursday, rattling nerves on the July 4th holiday and causing some injuries and damage in a town near the epicenter, followed by a swarm of ongoing aftershocks.

The 6.4 magnitude quake struck at 10:33 a.m. in the Mojave Desert, about 150 miles (240 kilometers) northeast of Los Angeles, near the town of Ridgecrest, California.

Multiple injuries and two house fires were reported in the town of 28,000. Emergency crews were also dealing with small vegetation fires, gas leaks and reports of cracked roads, said Kern County Fire Chief David Witt.

He said 15 patients were evacuated from the Ridgecrest Regional Hospital as a precaution and out of concern for aftershocks. Kern County District Supervisor Mick Gleason told CNN there were some structural issues with the hospital and some patients had to be moved from one ward to another and that others were taken to a neighboring building.

Gleason did not say what the structural issues were.

Ridgecrest Mayor Peggy Breeden said that utility workers were assessing broken gas lines and turning off gas where necessary.

The local senior center was holding a July 4th event when the quake hit and everyone made it out shaken up but without injuries, she said.

"Oh, my goodness, there's another one (quake) right now," Breeden said on live television as an aftershock struck.

President Donald Trump said he was fully briefed on the earthquake and that it "all seems to be very much under control!"

A series of aftershocks included a 4.5 magnitude

temblor, according to the United States Geological Survey. "It almost gave me a heart attack," said Cora Burke, a waitress at Midway Cafe in Ridgecrest, of the big jolt. "It's just a rolling feeling inside the building, inside the cafe and all of a sudden everything started falling off the shelf, glasses, the refrigerator and everything in the small refrigerator fell over." Video posted online of a liquor store in Ridgecrest showed the aisles filled with broken wine and liquor bottles, knocked down boxes and other groceries strewn on the floor. Flames were seen shooting out of one home in the community.

Lucy Jones, a seismologist with the California Institute of Technology's seismology lab, said the earthquake was the strongest since a 7.1 quake struck in the area on October 16, 1999.

"This has been an extremely quiet abnormal time," Jones said. "This type of earthquake is much more normal ... The long term average is probably once every five or 10 years somewhere in Southern California." Jones said that the 6.4 quake centered near the town of Ridgecrest was preceded by a magnitude 4.2 tremor about a half hour earlier.

She said vigorous aftershocks were occurring and that she wouldn't be surprised if a magnitude 5 quake hit but that they were striking in a remote area, sparsely populated area. "This is an isolated enough location that that's going to greatly reduce the damage," she said.

People from Las Vegas to the Pacific Coast reported feeling a rolling motion and took to social media to report it.

Local emergency agencies also took to social media to ask people to only call 911 for emergencies.

"We are very much aware of the significant earthquake that just occurred in Southern California. Please DO NOT call 9-1-1 unless there are injuries or other

dangerous conditions. Don't call for questions please," the LAPD said in a statement published on Twitter. There were no reports of serious damage or injuries in Los Angeles, the department said.

The quake was detected by California's new ShakeAlert system and it provided 48 seconds of warning to the seismology lab well before the shaking arrived at Caltech in the Los Angeles suburb of Pasadena but it did not trigger a public warning through an app recently made available in Los Angeles County.

USGS seismologist Robert Graves said the ShakeAlert system worked properly.



Seismologist Lucy Jones talks during a news conference at the Caltech Seismological Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif., Thursday, July 4, 2019.

Associated Press

Graves said it calculated an intensity level for the Los Angeles area that was below the threshold for a public alert. The limits are intended to avoid false alarms.

Ashleigh Chandler, a helicopter rescue EMT at Fort Irwin, California, said the

quake happened as she was getting ready for a July 4th party. "I was just in the living room getting everything ready, we start to feel the shaking, so then I look up and then the wine bottles start rattling and I thought, 'They're going to fall.' □



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Greek election front-runner keeps campaign unusually low-key

By DEREK GATOPoulos

THANASSIS STAVRAKIS

Associated Press

LAVRIO, Greece (AP) —

On an exhaustive tour of Greece's blue collar towns and city suburbs, Kyriakos Mitsotakis has a spring in his step. It's no wonder - he's the overwhelming favorite to become the country's next prime minister as the unlikely heir of a powerful political family.

Arriving at Lavrio, an old factory town near Athens, residents form a cluster of welcome next to a sea-front cafe. Mitsotakis steps out of his car and switches into casual campaigning mode, crouching to chat to children, greeting young men with an arm-wrestle handshake, hugging pensioners, and using his height to snap cellphone photos. He chooses a microphone over a podium and in less than 10 minutes hits the highlights of why he thinks voters should back his conservative New Democracy party: Greece, he argues, needs to embrace a pro-business culture after a decade of economic turbulence, fix its law-and-order problems, and continue making its once heavily over-staffed state bureaucracy more efficient.

A crowd of around 50 people listen politely, eager to get another chance to meet the man strongly favored to win in Sunday's general election.

The 51-year-old Mitsotakis



Greek opposition New Democracy party leader Kyriakos Mitsotakis waves to supporters at the end of his speech during his main election campaign rally in Athens, on Thursday, July 4, 2019.

Associated Press

heads to the election with a big lead in opinion polls over left-wing Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, who has led the country for the past four years as Greece struggled to bring an end to its crippling financial crisis and financial dependency on others, as well as cope with a massive refugee crisis — more than a million people arrived on Greece's eastern islands in 2015-16 in dinghies and unsafe boats before trying to make their way to the more prosperous countries of central Europe.

"I want to make Greece a normal European country," Mitsotakis told the AP, his ease with English reflecting a decade of studying in the

United States at Harvard University and Stanford.

"I'm sick and tired of us being treated as the poster boy for the crisis."

He's not alone in that wish. Greece has just struggled through one of its biggest crises since World War II. Forced to seek an international bailout in 2010, Greece's economy shrank by a quarter and unemployment had spiked to over 25 percent — double that among the young. Protests and riots became a feature of Greek life. Many were blamed for the hardship from political parties — including Mitsotakis' predecessors at New Democracy — to Greece's bailout creditors who de-

manded severe cutbacks in return for their financial help to Athens.

"As many mistakes as we made, there were also lots of mistakes made by our creditors," said Mitsotakis. "We want to leave this period behind us."

Mitsotakis is a pro-European conservative and should he win on Sunday, he will be confronted with an array of challenges, including renewed tension with neighbor Turkey and the ongoing draconian budget targets set by bailout lenders. Though Greece may no longer require direct financial assistance, it still needs to run a high budget surplus in order to pay off its debt, which despite years

of retrenchment still stands at a colossal 180 percent or so of the country's annual GDP. Born into one of Greece's best known political families, Mitsotakis is the son of confrontational conservative prime minister Constantine Mitsotakis, who led the country in the early 1990s. His sister Dora Bakogiannis later served as foreign minister, and his nephew Kostas Bakogiannis was recently elected Mayor of Athens.

"I'm very proud of my family legacy but I don't think you'll find many people who say they're voting for me because I'm the son of an ex-prime minister," he said. Mitsotakis had not been expected to lead the party, but was elected president of New Democracy in 2016, following four straight election defeats at national, local, and European elections. He struggled to win over many powerful figures in his party who viewed him as awkward in public and lacking swagger.

The criticism faded as he took the party's opinion poll lead to double digits and led landslide wins in regional and European elections in May. Confidence came from a punishing timetable of campaign appearances, picking small venues often in low-income areas in a bid to take on government strongholds as well as a widely-held perception of family privilege. □

Kosovo temporarily bans Serb officials from entering country

Associated Press

PRISTINA, Kosovo (AP) —

Kosovo temporarily banned Serbian officials from entering the country, triggering an angry reaction from Belgrade on Thursday.

Kosovo's Foreign Ministry said it took the action because of "Serbia's threats against Kosovo and continuous propaganda" and that all entry requests from Serbian officials "will be rejected as long as this behavior continues."

The move comes after Serbian officials claimed Kosovo's government was



In this photo taken Friday, Sept. 7, 2018, a car passes by a billboard that reads: "Welcome, President" and shows Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic, near village of Lesak in northern Kosovo.

Associated Press

trying to create a "humanitarian crisis" in the country's Serb-populated north with a 100% import tax slapped on Serbian goods last year. Kosovo Serb shop owners closed their stores in northern Kosovo for two days this week to protest the taxes. Kosovo Foreign Ministry spokesman Jetmir Zyberaj said the closures took place "because of Belgrade's political objectives."

Serbia does not recognize the 2008 independence declaration of Kosovo, a former Serbian province. Serbian Defense Minister

Aleksandar Vulin said the latest entry ban was an attempt to "cut all ties" between Kosovo Serbs and "their" Serbian leadership, and "this simply won't be allowed to happen."

Using the derogatory term in Serbia for ethnic Albanians, Vulin said the Kosovo government's ban was "not politics, but retaliation."

Serb officials need entry permits from Pristina to visit Kosovo, but have sometimes managed to enter using alternative routes through forests. □

Gibraltar detains Syria-bound supertanker with Iranian oil

By ARITZ PARRA

JON GAMBRELL

Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Authorities in Gibraltar said they intercepted Thursday an Iranian supertanker believed to be breaching European Union sanctions by carrying a shipment of Tehran's crude oil to war-ravaged Syria.

A senior Spanish official said the operation was requested by the United States. Iran's state-run IRNA news agency described the incident as "an illegal seizure of an Iranian oil tanker."

Gibraltar port and law enforcement agencies, assisted by Britain's Royal Marines, boarded the Grace 1 early Thursday, authorities on the British overseas territory at the tip of Spain said in a statement.

It added that the vessel was believed to be headed to the Baniyas Refinery in Syria, a government-owned facility under the control of Syrian President Bashar Assad and subject to the EU's Syrian Sanctions Regime.

The EU and others have imposed sanctions on Assad's government over its continued crackdown against civilians. They currently target 270 people and 70 entities. Spain's caretaker foreign minister Josep Borrell said the tanker was stopped by British authorities after a request from the United States. Iran later summoned the British ambassador in Tehran to answer questions about the operation. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said in a tweet that Rob Macaire was summoned over the "illegal interception" of the ship.

Mousavi later called the ship's seizure "odd and destructive." "It can cause an increase in tensions in the region," he said in a live telephone interview on state television Thursday night. In Madrid, Borrell told reporters that Spain is assessing the implications of the operation because the detention took place in waters it considers its own. Britain insists Gibraltar is part of the United Kingdom but



Grace 1 super tanker is anchored near a Royal Marine patrol vessel in the British territory of Gibraltar, Thursday, July 4, 2019.

Spain argues that it is not, and the tanker operation risks offending the Spanish. "We're looking into how this (operation) affects our sovereignty," said Borrell, who was nominated earlier this week to become the EU's foreign policy chief. The Gibraltar authorities didn't confirm the origin of the ship's cargo but Lloyd's List, a publication specializing in maritime affairs, reported this week that the Panama-flagged large carrier was laden with Iranian oil.

The vessel likely carried just over 2 million barrels of Iranian crude oil, the data firm Refinitiv said. Tracking data showed that the tanker made a slow trip around the southern tip of Africa before reaching the Mediterranean, it said.

The tanker's detention comes at a particularly sensitive time as tensions between the U.S. and Iran grow over the unraveling of a 2015 nuclear deal, which President Donald Trump withdrew from last year. Trump has also slapped sanctions onto Iran and recently approved the passage of a carrier group, bombers and fighter jets to the Persian Gulf.

In recent days, Iran has broken through the limit the deal put on its stockpile of low-enriched uranium and plans on Sunday to boost its enrichment. Meanwhile, oil tankers near the Strait

of Hormuz have been targeted in mysterious attacks as Iranian-backed rebels in Yemen launch bomb-laden drones into Saudi Arabia. The U.S. has rushed thousands of additional troops, an aircraft carrier, B-52 bombers and F-22 fighters to the region, raising fears of a miscalculation sparking a wider conflict.

Last month Iran shot down a U.S. surveillance drone, further stoking those fears. Iran's intelligence minister said Thursday that any negotiations with the U.S. would have to be approved by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and would require the lifting of U.S. sanctions. Khamenei has until now ruled out talks with the U.S.,

Associated Press

saying that Washington cannot be trusted.

On Thursday, the official IRNA news agency quoted Information Minister Mahmoud Alavi as saying "if the supreme leader permits, negotiations between Iran and the United States will be held." He added, however, that Tehran would not negotiate under pressure. There was no immediate reaction to the tanker's detention from Syria, which has suffered severe fuel shortages as a result of the civil war and Western sanctions that have crippled the country's oil industry, once the source of 20 percent of government revenues.

Iran, which has provided vital military support to Assad, extended a \$3 billion credit line for oil supplies beginning in 2013 but the Iranian aid dwindled as Washington restored tough sanctions. In November, the U.S. Treasury Department added a network of Russian and Iranian companies to its blacklist for shipping oil to Syria and warned of "significant risks" for those violating the sanctions. □

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Australian Senate passes \$110 billion tax cuts over decade

By ROD McGUIRK

Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)

— Australia's Parliament on Thursday delivered the reelected government's promise to provide 158 billion Australian dollars (\$110 billion) in personal income tax cuts over a decade to boost a flagging economy. Prime Minister Scott Morrison said his conservative coalition's election victory in May gave him a mandate to pass the tax cuts, which the center-left Labor Party opposition rejected as too generous to the wealthy.

The government hopes that the cuts for more than 10 million of Australia's 25 million people will stimulate a slowing economy that risks dipping into recession for the first time in 28 years. The central bank cut a key interest rate to a record low 1% this week in a bid to boost employment and wages.

The government has made the tax cuts its priority since Parliament opened for its first post-election session on Tuesday, when the House of Representatives passed the cuts.

Independent Sen. Jacqui Lambie on Thursday became the last of the four unaligned senators the government needed to pass the legislation to con-



Treasurer Josh Frydenberg speaks to Australia's Parliament in Canberra on Thursday, July 4, 2019.

Associated Press

firm her support.

She demanded in return AU\$157 million in federal money for housing the poor in her island state of Tasmania.

"I need those kids and their families off the streets in warm houses," she said.

The two senators of the minor Center Alliance party, Stirling Griff and Rex Patrick — who demanded lower energy prices for households in return for their support — as well as former government Sen. Cori Bernardi had previously said they would vote with the government on the legisla-

The government has yet to finalize any deal with the unaligned senators, but the senators voted on Thursday with the government in expectation that agreements will be reached within weeks.

With the tax cuts guaranteed to pass, Labor finally gave its support to the legislation, which passed 56 votes to nine. After Labor amendments were rejected, the party argued it would not oppose tax cuts for employees.

"We do not want the circumstances whereby an economy that is struggling prevents people get-

ting a tax benefit of up to ... AU\$1,080," opposition leader Anthony Albanese told reporters.

"The economy needs that, the economy needs that now," he added.

The Senate vote is an important victory for the government which was elected for a third three-year term at May 18 elections after a campaign that focused on tax cuts. The prime minister will be reluctant to disappoint the unaligned senators at the start of three years with the government in minority in the hostile upper chamber.

After the Senate vote,

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said the additional money would flow to taxpayers starting next week, boosting household incomes and economic activity.

Frydenberg said the tax cuts would be delivered and the government would achieve Australia's first annual budget surplus in more than a decade in the current fiscal year without reducing government spending.

The central bank wants the government to boost investment on infrastructure such as ports, road and rail to further stimulate economic growth.

"What we are doing is growing the economy," Frydenberg said. "So there are no (spending) cuts."

The first round of cuts reduces the annual tax bill of 10 million Australians earning up AU\$126,000 by up to AU\$1,080 (\$740) a year.

The change most expensive to government coffers starts in 2014, when the 32.5% tax rate will be reduced to 30%. That reduces the tax paid by Australians earning between AU\$45,000 and AU\$200,000. The government expects 94% of Australian taxpayers will pay a tax rate of 30% or less in five years. Only 16% would pay that little tax if the Senate had rejected the legislation. □

Iraq gov't detains thousands in degrading conditions

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA

Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — A leading international human rights organization criticized the Iraqi government Thursday for holding thousands of prisoners, including children, in degrading and "inhuman" conditions. Human Rights Watch cited extreme overcrowding in three pretrial detention facilities in northern Iraq's Nineveh province where prisoners are held mostly on terrorism charges. In a statement Thursday, it says the three centers have a combined maximum capacity of 2,500 people and are holding about 4,500 detainees. Of that



In this Tuesday, July 18, 2017 file photo, Suspected Islamic State members sit inside a small room in a prison south of Mosul, Iraq.

Associated Press

number, 1,300 had been tried and convicted and should have been transferred to Baghdad prisons, it said, citing a senior Iraqi

penitentiary expert who requested anonymity.

"Iraq has a duty to ensure that detainees are housed decently, in line with inter-

national standards," said Lama Fakih, acting Middle East director at HRW, calling on the government to urgently rebuild and rehabilitate its detention facilities. Iraq is holding huge numbers of detainees on suspicion of ties to the Islamic State group. The country declared victory against IS in December 2017 after three years of bloody battles that killed tens of thousands and left Iraqi cities in ruins, and is grappling with a massive legacy from the fight. That includes thousands of detainees, including children, who are being sentenced in rushed trials. HRW said prisoners and

detrainees often have no space to lie down or sit comfortably, and prison authorities do not provide mattresses because there is no room for them in the cells, citing photos and other evidence shared by the expert.

The accusations are in line with Associated Press reporting from northern Iraq. AP journalists visiting a facility just outside the city of Mosul last year saw more than 100 prisoners packed into a dark room, lined up shoulder to shoulder on the floor. There was no electricity or ventilation, despite daytime temperatures well over 110 degrees Fahrenheit (45 Celsius). □



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INSIDE & OUTSIDE SEATING - FREE PARKING

Japan export curbs take effect as SKorean officials protest

By KIM TONG-HYUNG

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)

— Tightened Japanese controls on exports of key materials used to make semiconductors and displays took effect Thursday, as South Korean officials vowed to fight back.

The Japanese government ordered the more stringent approval process for shipments of photoresists and other key chemicals as relations with its neighbor and fellow U.S. ally deteriorated due to issues related to forced labor during World War II.

The president's office said South Korea's National Security Council met Thursday in Seoul, with members vowing to pursue diplomatic countermeasures.

It said the move is viewed as an "explicit breach of international law, including World Trade Organization regulations."

Japanese officials insist the



In this Nov. 14, 2018, file photo, a container ship is docked at a port in Tokyo.

decision to end preferential treatment for such exports to South Korea was required because of a lack of trust that poses a risk to national security.

Yoo Myung-hee, minister for trade at South Korea's Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy, said the revised rules not only hurt ties with Japan but also might disrupt global supply chains. "Japan's move to impose

stronger export restrictions based on an arbitrary claim of 'damaged trust' fully goes against the spirit of the (international arrangement) to control exports of strategic commodities," Yoo said in a meeting with trade and technology industry officials on Thursday. She said the Japanese measures go against both WTO rules and an agreement called the Wassenaar

Arrangement, a 42-country arms-control pact aimed at governing weapons trade and the dissemination of sensitive technologies that can be used both for civilian and military purposes. Japan and South Korea both are members of the pact, which requires that export restrictions should not be directed against a specific country and also not impede "bona fide civil transactions," the ministry said. The ministry earlier said the Seoul government plans to file a complaint with WTO over the Japanese measures.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry spokesman Kim In-chul on Thursday reiterated Seoul's demand for Tokyo to "immediately" withdraw the trade restrictions.

"The measure is an irrational economic retaliation and goes against common sense," Kim said. "It's very regrettable (that the measure went into effect)."

A Japanese government spokesman reiterated Tokyo's insistence that the tighter controls were needed on national security grounds, even though officials have not given any examples of specific problems. "Export controls with South Korea have been challenging. Inaccurate and inappropriate cases have occurred, so stricter, tougher export controls are needed," Yasutoshi Nishimura, a deputy chief cabinet secretary said.

South Korean tech company LG Display said it's not affected by the Japanese trade restrictions. But officials from Samsung Electronics, the world's biggest maker of memory chips and smartphones that competes closely with LG for the top spot in displays, and SK Hynix, another major chipmaker, said the companies were assessing the potential impact to their businesses. □

Death toll in western India dam breach climbs to 15



An Indian man stands near his house as waves caused by high tide hits the huts on the shore of the Arabian Sea in Mumbai, India, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

Associated Press

Associated Press

MUMBAI, India (AP) — Rescuers in western India recovered three more bodies on Thursday morning, raising the death toll to 15 after a small dam breached and flooded half a dozen villages following heavy monsoon rains, officials said.

Rescue teams were still searching for eight people after Tiware dam breached late Tuesday during incessant rains and swept away nearly a dozen homes, said Datta Bhadakawad, a civil administrator in Maharashtra state's Ratnagiri district.

Datta said authorities ordered an investigation of the dam breach. The dam had developed cracks and overflowed after heavy rainfall in the coastal region.

Heavy monsoon rains in Maharashtra have led to at least 34 deaths since Monday night from collapsed walls, drownings and other causes. Dozens of others have been injured.

The worst-hit city was India's financial and entertainment capital, Mumbai,

where at least 24 people died and over 60 others were injured. Five days of rain in Mumbai disrupted flights, flooded roads and covered train tracks, though services resumed as the rain cleared on Wednesday.

The monsoon season in India brings heavy rains from June to September that cause flooding and other damage. Building and wall collapses are common as the rains weaken the foundations of poorly built structures. □

UN: 5,287 killings in Venezuela security operations in 2018

By JAMEY KEATEN

SCOTT SMITH

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — Venezuela's government registered nearly 5,300 killings during security operations last year linked to cases of "resistance to authority," the U.N. human rights chief reported Thursday, denouncing a "shockingly high" number of extrajudicial killings.

Michelle Bachelet's report focusing on the last 18 months follows her trip to the troubled South American country last month and draws upon over 550 interviews conducted by her office with rights defenders, victims, witnesses of rights violations and other sources. She and her teams held nearly 160 meetings with state and other stakeholders. Bachelet, a former Socialist president of Chile, herself met with Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro last month.

Authorities in Maduro's government tallied 5,287 killings during security operations that were classified as cases of "resistance to authority," plus another 1,569 this year through May 19, the report said. It also cited separate figures by the Venezuelan Violence Observatory of at least 7,523 such killings of that type last year, plus at least 2,124 from January to May this year.



U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, left, chats with Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro, as they walk out of a meeting at Miraflores Presidential Palace, in Caracas, Venezuela, Friday, June 21, 2019.

"The incidence of alleged extrajudicial killings by security forces, particularly the special forces (FAES), in the context of security operations has been shockingly high," Bachelet's office said.

Interviewees consistently referred to FAES as a "death squad" or "extermination group." NGOs say the FAES is responsible for hundreds of killings.

Among more than 20 recommendations on issues like ensuring media free-

dom and providing proper health care, she called for disarming and disbanding pro-government armed groups known as "collectivos."

The report from an ostensibly impartial observer like the United Nations comes as Venezuela's internal turmoil of recent years has divided the international community.

Over 50 countries, including the United States, many South American neighbors of Venezuela and Euro-

pean nations, have recognized opposition leader Juan Guaidó as Venezuela's legitimate leader, even though Maduro remains in power.

Maduro's government blasted an "openly biased" account that presented a "distorted version" of actual conditions.

"There are countless inaccuracies, errors, facts taken out of context and false assertions," it said.

Venezuelan officials insisted the report overlooked

Associated Press

visits by U.N. observers in March to jails, hospitals, public housing programs and distribution centers for medicine and food, and said it "omits in its entirety the achievements and advances achieved" by the country in the field of human rights.

Maduro's government has been struggling to regain control of the international narrative about the oil-rich country, notably through its recent overtures to international groups like the Red Cross and U.N. agencies — many of which are trying to help beleaguered civilians. The U.N. says that more than 4 million people have left the country in recent years, putting strains in particular on neighbors Brazil and Colombia, as well as Peru.

Many findings of the report highlighted well-worn themes during Venezuela's continued economic and political crisis: the impact of international sanctions against Maduro's government, a wobbly health care system, rising disease, food shortages and the strains caused by runaway inflation.

It cited repression of political opponents, arbitrary detentions and cases of torture and cruel treatment including electric shocks, suffocation with plastic bags, water boarding, and sexual violence. □

Mexico's federal police block highways on 2nd day of strike

By CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexican officials blamed the political opposition, corrupt federal police and outside players on Thursday for instigating a revolt by security forces who are opposed to being absorbed into the newly created National Guard.

Federal police maintained control of a command center in the Mexico City borough of Iztapalapa for a second day and snarled traffic by blocking highways outside the capital. Meanwhile, in the southern border state of Chiapas, they hung signs express-



Uniformed federal police block the highway between Mexico City and Pachuca in both directions, in Ecatepec, Mexico, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

Associated Press

ing support for their colleagues.

The protesting federal po-

lice are demonstrating against a plan that dissolves the force and incorporates

it into the Guard, which has now been deployed to seal the country's porous southern border and control immigration and crime.

López Obrador previously attributed the protests to "dark forces" and suggested there were ulterior motives without explaining his accusation. But security secretary Alfonso Durazo offered further details Thursday, suggesting that former President Felipe Calderón was among those responsible.

"Some of the visible leaders of the movement are not members of the institution," Durazo said. "They are people tied to interest groups

who have profited from million (peso) contracts for the purchase of unused gasoline and technology among many others."

Durazo accused some of those now defending the police — like Calderón — as being the same officials who did not develop it as an effective security force.

"If the federal police was a sufficient and adequate entity we wouldn't have the levels of insecurity that we have today," he said.

He also accepted some responsibility by saying that communication may have been insufficient as the government rushed to do away with the agency. □

LOCAL



Aruba Symphony Festival Introduces VIP Access Tickets

ORANJESTAD — The Aruba Symphony Festival and Academy is an international event where every year, first-class musicians from around the globe make Aruba their destination. During these 12 intensive days of music-making, guest artists and students from more than 15 countries give the happy island an unforgettable experience with full-house concerts, workshops, conferences and classes led by celebrated international artists. Most of these concerts are FREE, some have a small admission and NEW is that the festival offers VIP packages this year. This is an event you don't want to miss. Aruba Today will have more on this program and the participants in future editions.

The fifth edition of the Aruba Symphony Festival will inaugurate on July 17 at Cas di Cultura with the participation of the women's choir Den Harmonia and the Santa Ana School (Noord) children's choir under the direction of the Aruban Opera soprano Tica Giel and accompanied by the legendary Aruban pianist Johnny Scharbaay. Their program consists mostly of traditional Aruban songs. Tica also will sing some numbers. After the performance of the singers, the world renowned Venezuelan pianist Edith Peña will play Variations on the theme "Ah, vous dirai-je, maman!" C Major. KV 265 W. A. Mozart; following this, Randolph Kelly, the principal violist of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra will join Edith to play "Arpeggione" Sonata D. 821 – F. Schubert, and to end the evening's program, Edith will combine with Adam Liu to play J. Brahms' Cello Sonata No. 1 Op. 38. Adam Liu has been Professor of music at Duquesne University for over 11 years. He is the assistant principal cellist of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

During the following 10 days after July 17th, Aruba will be in the grip of concerts by over 100 world-renowned musicians and conservatory-level music students. As part of the Academic program, the Festival will also feature the internationally well-known Dr. Benjamin Zander who will give his world acclaimed lecture, "The Art of Possibilities."

VIP Package

Responding to requests from fans of the Symphony Festival, the Board of Directors has introduced the VIP Access ticket. The VIP Access ticket costs Afsl 200.00. It is valid for all concerts and other events staged by the Aruba Symphony Festival. It is the ticket of admission at the concerts where admission is charged, it guarantees seating in the reserved VIP seating section at all venues, whether it is at Cas di Cultura, Ritz-Carlton, Casibari Café, Paseo Herencia or on board the Freewinds, and it is the invitation to the cocktail at Cas di Cultura following the opening concert where the guests can mingle with the musicians.

The Story behind the Festival

Simon Gollo is founder and President of the Aruban not-for-profit Nuevo Mundo Foundation that organizes and produces the Aruba Symphony Festival and Academy, of which he is also the Artistic Director, its heart and soul. Gollo has given some 30 concerts in tens of countries all over the world during the last twelve months. Next month he will go on a three nations' tour, Czech Republic, Germany and Austria, as a member of Q-arte String Quartet of Bogotá, Colombia. Later this year he will be directing orchestras at several concerts in Brazil, and Simon has also been invited to direct orchestras in Vietnam in 2020.

Continued on Page 14



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Aruba Symphony Festival Introduces VIP Access Tickets



Continued from Page 13



The Aruba Symphony Festival tries to involve Arubans in its activities. Last year the Festival featured the two best known Aruban songs, "Aruba Dushi Tera," "Abo So" and other songs by wellknown Aruban composers, and sung by the two best known choirs of Aruba: "Ars Nova" and "Cantare" directed by Mayra Kock - Garrido, accompanied by icons of the Aruban musical scene, Edwin Kock, Ryan Maduro among others. In past years the Festival gave scholarships to an Aruban pianist and a trombone player, and has advertised that more scholarships are available this year.

Culture and Education, together with the Family, form the backbone of the Aruban society. The Aruban government has embraced the concept of the LeerOrkest that education without music is not education, and it is now striving to bring music back into the curriculum of the basic schools. According to the philosopher/educator Emil Friedman, culture without music is not culture. The Aruba Symphony Festival is Aruba's strongest expression of our musical culture and we are indebted to Gollo for his decision to stage the Festival here. Because the musicians come from so many parts of the world, the Aruba Symphony Festival, like the festivals of Tanglewood and Aspen, has also become a strong platform for publicity of Aruba as a tourist destination. □

VIP Access tickets are obtainable at all bookstores, at the four stores of Aruba Vision Center, at Cas di Cultura and at the board members of the Aruba Symphony Festival: Alberto Perret-Gentil (aperret@perretingenieros.com), Johnny Croes (johnnycroes62@gmail.com), Clyde Harms (clydeharms@yahoo.com) y Orietta Mansur (oriettmansur@gmail.com). VIP Access tickets make wonderful gifts for family and friends, personal or commercial. For more about the program and the performers at the Aruba Symphony Festival 2019, visit www.arubasymphonyfestival.com.

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Aruba Marriott Resort Honored with Operational Excellence Award 2018 For top Performance within The Caribbean & Latin America region

PALM BEACH – Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino was recently named the winner of the Operational Excellence Award 2018 within the Caribbean & Latin America region for the Premium Full Service category, during the Marriott Operations Summit in Cancun Mexico.

The hotel was awarded this prestigious accolade based on its successful year, achieving high results on the operational hotel wide scoreboard. This includes impressive achievements on all audits (brand standard audit, safety audit, Marriott Bonvoy audit) and high scores on all key parameters of guest service satisfaction (check-in experience, staff service, food quality, room cleanliness, internet speed and performance, and elite appreciation).

"Congratulations to the entire team on winning the Operational Excellence Award 2018," shared Karen Chastain, Complex General Manager. "I want to thank our Associates and Management Team, for their continued commitment



and dedication to the hotel's success year over year". This property-based performance accolade is one of the ways Marriott celebrates its associates and

honors Marriott hotels that exemplify the legendary spirit to serve the customer and communities in which they operate. It is part of Marriott's most important and en-

during principle set forth by the company's founder J. Willard Marriott, "if you take care of your associates, they will take care of the customer". □

Rick and Dede Grosser: “At home we have family, here we have friends and family”



PALM BEACH — They fell in love with Aruba on their first visit to the island in 1991. For the last 28 years, they have been staying at what is now Barcelo Aruba, the resort has changed brands and names during the years but they stayed loyal to the resort. For the past 15 years they've spent their vacations here four times a year. They bring their family, about 50 people, in June every year. We can - without a doubt - call them VIP Ambassadors of Aruba. Meet the wonderful couple, Dede and Rick Grosser of Rochester, New York.

The interview with Aruba Today is interrupted a couple of times because staff of the resort and other guests are being greeted by Dede and Rick. They seem to know everybody, well not seem, they do know everyone. Rick: "It is a large resort, but we grew up with the people who work here. Also, we vacation here year around and we meet the many repeat guests. Together with the resort's employees they are our Aruba family." The resort treats guests with respect, whether you are a first timer or a repeat guest, says Rick. "That is just how they are. It is convenient that this is a full inclusive resort, but when we feel like dining out we do so. The resort's beach to me is the best stretch of sand on Palm Beach." Rick even opened the Facebook page I Love Barcelo Aruba Group creating a meeting point for travelers to Aruba.

First Visit

Dede had heard about Aruba. And after they experienced a nightmare vacation in Mexico, the couple was up to a success story. "The very first night we went to the Buccaneer restaurant for dinner, which was back in 1991, we met the chef who was going around every table to check up on the guests and we had a great chat together. He introduced us to some cab drivers that used to hang out there and

they invited us to go bowling. It was a terrific night. I told Dede: I love this place; they are so friendly and even invite us to spend a night out with them without even knowing us. We were hooked ever since then." Even when Dede was pregnant they came to vacation and their three children have spent their youth vacations on Aruba. Once a year, in June, they come with the whole family, about 50 people in total. The group fell in deep love with Aruba. "We all come together here as family, my nieces, nephews, in-laws, the children. The group has branched out and they all know us. Some of the resort's staff and repeat guests are even coming to my daughter's wedding soon."

European Safety & Caribbean Flair

The friendly people, the resort, and the climate are all ingredients they love here. Dede: "The romance of the island, every single part of it is

perfect. Everyone we meet here shows respect and that to us is what the island represents: respect and love. The Aruban people are the most respectful people you ever meet, they treat you with love and warmth and are genuine." The European touch is a big plus to them. "We love our Dutch friends here, we go to 080 bar, Bugaloe and Aruba water Sports. The Dutch are trustworthy people. The European efficiency and safety, mixed with the Caribbean flair is a unique cocktail they say.

Points of Attention

The couple can be considered Aruba experts, knowing what Americans want and having the many years of experience on the island. Some recent developments worry them, like the excessive traffic and construction.

"They need to slow down the construction, this will bring in too many workers from outside and what will that do to the values of the island? You don't want this to become a Dominican Republic. The resorts on many other Caribbean destinations might be more majestic sometimes, but that is also because you cannot leave the resort. You need to stay inside for your safety." That on Aruba is not the case, but the government should maintain that, is their opinion. "There are also too many rental cars and ATV's. I am not a big fan of that, they make too much noise and ruin nature. They also cross neighborhoods and not everyone knows how to drive them. The government should have more safety regulations in place for activities." Americans tend to think they are covered for injuries but they are not, Rick explains. "And the maintenance of the equipment many times is not done properly."

He reads about what is happening on the island and his friends that live here inform him. The couple represent a lot of Americans in their opinion. "There is a general lack of education and information available for the visitors. How to treat the underwater world, how to drive on the island. Many do not realize, they are not informed not to touch the coral, not to drive the sand dunes etc. Not to drink and drive. Do this to protect your island!" □



SPORTS



Hideki Matsuyama lines up a putt on the third hole during the first round of the 3M Open golf tournament in Blaine, Minn., Thursday, July 4, 2019.

Associated Press

Piercy leads by 2 after 1st round of 3M Open

By MIKE COOK
Associated Press

BLAINE, Minn. (AP) — Scott Piercy had one birdie in his first seven holes Thursday. Then he went on a binge. Piercy birdied eight of his final 11 holes en route to a 9-under 62 and a two-shot lead after the first round of the inaugural 3M Open.

"I was thinking 4, 5-under a day would be nice.

You always get one or two guys that kind of go really low and I just happened to be that guy," Piercy said.

Adam Hadwin and Hideki Matsuyama are each two shots back after a 7-under 64 at the TPC Twin Cities.

Seeking his fifth career tour win and first since the 2018 Zurich Classic, Piercy birdied one of his first seven holes and eight of his final 11, including a nearly 30-foot putt on No. 16 to get to 8 under.

He needed just 25 strokes on the greens.

Continued on Page 22



KRYGIOS CASE

Rafa edges past Kyrgios in thriller

Spain's Rafael Nadal celebrates after beating Australia's Nick Kyrgios in a Men's singles match during day four of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London, Thursday, July 4, 2019.

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Plenty of dramatics as Nadal tops Kyrgios at Wimbledon



United States' Serena Williams looks down at the ball after losing a point to Slovenia's Kaja Juvan in a Women's singles match during day four of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London, Thursday, July 4, 2019.

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer

WIMBLEDON, England

(AP) — Rafael Nadal was up near the Centre Court net when Nick Kyrgios smacked a booming forehand directly at the guy's midsection — right at him, on purpose — and earned a lengthy staredown in return.

Kyrgios didn't apologize, at the time or at his news conference — for that or for berating the chair umpire or for spending time at a local pub the night before the match.

Rarely does Kyrgios offer regrets, for much of anything. Instead, he tends to double down. He is nothing if not fascinating. He is talented, too.

And yet it was Nadal who emerged from all of the tumult Thursday at Wimbledon to beat Kyrgios 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (3) in a second-round match boasting plenty of dramatics, a dose of animosity and delightful play by both men.

"I'm always willing to go out there and try and put on a show. I know people

that bought a ticket today probably had a great day," said Kyrgios, a 24-year-old Australian who is ranked 43rd.

"At times today, I was looking around: This is Wimbledon, playing Rafa. ... But I'll probably wake up tomorrow (and) there will be something negative about it, for sure."

Kyrgios is capable of being as entertaining and befuddling a player as there is and showed why throughout this 3-hour-plus contest that overshadowed everything else going on around the grass-court Grand Slam tournament on Day 4.

Defending champion Angelique Kerber was upset by Lauren Davis, an American who lost in qualifying but got into the main draw when someone else withdrew.

Seven-time champion Serena Williams needed a comeback to win in three sets against an 18-year-old qualifier.

Williams' partner for mixed doubles, two-time Wimbledon singles winner Andy Murray, won his first-round

match in men's doubles as he returned to the tournament for the first time in two years following two hip operations.

Marcos Baghdati, the 2006 Australian Open runner-up and a fan favorite, played what he says will be the last match of his career.

Marin Cilic, the 2014 U.S. Open champion and a 2017 Wimbledon finalist, lost, too.

None of that really mattered, in the end.

Everything was rendered secondary to Nadal vs. Kyrgios.

Part of that is because a 19-year-old Kyrgios beat then-No. 1 Nadal at the All England Club in 2014.

Part of that is because they traded barbs away from the court recently in a spat that also involved Nadal's uncle, Toni.

In the leadup to this meeting, Kyrgios joked that he didn't think "me and Rafa could go down to the Dog & Fox and have a beer together," referring to a nearby bar where Kyrgios was spotted Wednesday night.

The 33-year-old Nadal,

Associated Press

meanwhile, observed that he was "too old for all this stuff."

They could hardly be more different, something Kyrgios underlined after he lost despite producing a 58-44 advantage in winners, including 29 aces — one a second serve at a tournament-high 143 mph and a pair that he hit with an underarm motion.

These two couldn't even agree on whether Kyrgios is capable of winning major championships.

Nadal's take? "With his talent and with his serve, he can win a Grand Slam, of course."

And Kyrgios' self-assessment? "I know what I'm capable of."

Just depends. I'm a great tennis player, but I don't do the other stuff.

I'm not the most professional guy. I won't train day in, day out. I won't show up every day.

So there's a lot of things I need to improve on to get to that level that Rafa brings.

... But, no, at the moment I don't think I can contend

for a Grand Slam."

He is ranked 43rd, and hasn't been past the quarterfinals at a major. But against Nadal, he displayed boundless power, guile, touch and athleticism.

Kyrgios, his shirt collared popped just so, seemed to act at times as if it were more important to look cool than to play well.

The between-the-leg shots, the unnecessary leaping backhands and all the rest. On the initial point of the pivotal fourth-set tiebreaker, he jumped high for a showy overhead instead of making a safer putaway.

The result? He deposited his shot ball in the net, then rolled his eyes and chucked away a ball.

Soon, the match was over. Much earlier, he had several loud arguments with chair umpire Damien Dumusois, complaining about all sorts of things, including how long Nadal took between points and whether the official was seeking too much attention.

During the match, Kyrgios earned a warning for unsportsmanlike conduct after calling Dumusois a "disgrace." At his news conference, Kyrgios' insults of choice were "horrendous" and "terrible."

In the third set, there was that "dangerous" ball — Nadal's word — he sent toward the Spaniard, who blocked it with his racket at the last second.

Perhaps startled, Nadal double-faulted on the next point. But he wound up holding serve, then celebrating like he'd won the match, leaping and yelling and punching the air. When he eventually did seal the victory, Nadal wagged a finger and shouted and fist-pumped some more.

Asked by a reporter why he didn't say sorry at the time, Kyrgios replied: "I didn't hit him."

Hit his racket, no? Why would I apologize? I won the point. ... I mean, the dude has got how many Slams, how much money in the bank account?

I think he can take a ball to the chest, bro." □

Liu breaks her personal best for early lead in LPGA event

ONEIDA, Wis. (AP) — One year after Yu Liu shot her lowest round on the LPGA Tour at Thornberry Creek of Oneida, she tied the course record with a 10-under 62 for a one-shot lead in the Thornberry Creek LPGA Classic.

"I really like the golf course, apparently," Liu said. "So it's just nice to be out here. Just great vibes."

It was nice for just about everyone on a rain-softened course in which nearly half of the 140-player field shot in the 60s. Liu, a 23-year-old from China, had a one-shot lead over Jeongeun Lee and Yealimi Noh, who only got into the tournament through Monday qualifying.

Sung Hyun Park, who won last week in Arkansas to return to No. 1 in the world, opened with a 65.

Liu started on No. 10 and shot a 30 on the back nine, including an eagle on the par-5 13th hole.

She thought her score could have been lower, especially after failing to birdie two of the par 5s, including her last hole at No. 9.

Even so, she did what was required on a course that felt like target practice.

"It was playing pretty soft, so it takes a lot of the pressure off for the approach shots because you know where you land is pretty much where you're going to finish," Liu said. "So not much calculation was needed. I was just hitting it pretty solid."

It wasn't easy for everyone, particularly Presley Cornelius.

Cornelius is an amateur from Wisconsin and an Oneida Tribal member who was given a sponsor exemption. She made only three pars, had no birdies and finished with a 96. The LPGA Tour no longer has the "88 Rule" that banned players from competition for a year if they are not LPGA Tour members and fail to break 88.

According to www.wisconsin.golf, the Oneida Nation first gave Cornelius

a spot in the Monday qualifier, and then gave her an exemption when a spot came open.

Sei Young Kim won the tournament last year at 31-under 257 for a nine-shot victory, so low scoring at Thornberry Creek is nothing new.

Tiffany Joh and Nasa Hataoka were among those at 64, while the group two shots behind at 65 included Park, Shanshan Feng and Anna Nordqvist, who last year shot 67 all four rounds for 20 under and still finished 11 shots behind.

"This is just a course that for some reason you know you have to make birdies," Nordqvist said.

"Played well here last year,

so I have good memories, but when you don't birdie a couple in a row, you know you're kind of getting a little behind. So I just try to keep making birdies and keep staying aggressive."

Lee began her round with a par on No. 10 and then ran off seven birdies over her next eight holes for a 29 on the back.

After an eagle on the par-5 third, she already was 9 under through 14 holes. Lee had to settle for six pars coming in and a 63, her lowest score in her second year on the LPGA Tour.

"There were many birdie opportunities, but I left a couple of them out there," Lee said. "So that was a little disappointing." □



Sung Hyun Park, of South Korea, hits a shot on the 11th hole during the first round of the Thornberry Creek LPGA Classic golf tournament Thursday, July 4, 2019, in Oneida, Wis.

Associated Press

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Strasburg immaculate as surging Nationals beat Marlins 3-1



Washington Nationals starting pitcher Stephen Strasburg follows through on a pitch to the Miami Marlins in the second inning of a baseball game, Wednesday, July 3, 2019, in Washington.

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Stephen Strasburg struck out 14 in 7 1/3 shutout innings, Brian Dozier and Matt Adams homered, and the Washington Nationals continued their midseason surge with a 3-1 win over the Miami Marlins on Wednesday night.

Washington has won seven of its last eight and is 25-10 since May 24. The Nationals improved to 44-41, the first time they've been three games over .500 this season. Strasburg (10-4) was, as usual, brilliant against the Marlins. He allowed two hits and two walks while extending his personal winning streak against Miami to 11. The right-hander is 20-7 with a 2.86 ERA in 34 career starts against the Marlins, who didn't get a man past first until the eighth.

Strasburg's gem included the first immaculate inning of his career. Strasburg needed just nine pitches to strike out Garrett Cooper, Neil Walker and Starlin Castro in the fourth.

Miami's Sandy Alcantara (4-8), making his first start since earning an All-Star nod Sunday, allowed two runs in 5 2/3 innings.

DODGERS 5, DIAMOND-

BACKS 4, 10 INNINGS

LOS ANGELES (AP) — All-Star Cody Bellinger hit a tie-breaking homer, giving Los Angeles a fifth consecutive walk-off victory at home, over Arizona.

Bellinger hit a solo shot in the second and his 29 homers are the most in franchise history before the All-Star break. He broke a tie with Gil Hodges and Duke Snider, who had 28.

After Chris Taylor struck out to open the 10th, Bellinger crushed a high-arching pitch from Yoan López (1-2) into right field, triggering a raucous celebration and chants of "MVP! MVP!"

Joe Kelly (3-3) got the win after retiring the side in the 10th.

The Dodgers had a chance to win it in the ninth when Arizona closer Greg Holland stumbled for the second straight night.

Enrique Hernández opened the inning with a double to deep right. Holland issued four of Arizona's five walks with two outs in the ninth Tuesday.

Matt Beaty's RBI single tied the game 4-all. He took second on Holland's wild pitch.

YANKEES 5, METS 1

NEW YORK (AP) — Domingo

Germán pitched six sharp innings in his return from injury, Didi Gregorius and Gio Urshela hit consecutive homers, and the Yankees beat the Mets.

Germán (10-2) allowed a run over six innings, giving up five hits and no walks. The 26-year-old right-hander struck out six and threw 80 pitches in a tidy return from a strained left hip flexor, which had sidelined him since June 8.

The AL East-leading Yankees have won 14 of 16 overall and forced a four-game split in this year's Subway Series. The Mets haven't won the season series since 2013.

Mets starter Jason Vargas (3-4) settled after a rocky first inning, pitching three-run ball into the sixth.

REDS 3, BREWERS 0

CINCINNATI (AP) — Yasiel Puig homered for the second consecutive game and Cincinnati overcame the loss of second baseman Scooter Gennett to a groin injury, holding on for a victory over Milwaukee.

Gennett left after two at-bats because of tightness in the left side of his groin. Gennett was an All-Star last year and the Reds' most productive hitter over the

last two seasons, but he suffered a severe injury to the other side of his groin during spring training and had been sidelined until last week. He has two singles in 19 at-bats over five games. Sonny Gray (5-5) beat the Brewers for the second time in three starts this season, matching his career high with 12 strikeouts in eight innings. Raisel Iglesias pitched the ninth for his 15th save in 17 chances.

Puig connected in the second inning off Jhoulys Chacín (3-9), who hasn't won since April. The right-hander is 0-6 in his last nine games with a 5.93 ERA. He struck out a season-high eight and allowed seven hits.

BRAVES 9, PHILLIES 2

ATLANTA (AP) — Josh Donaldson and Austin Riley hit three-run homers off Nick Pivetta and Atlanta solidified its NL East lead by beating Philadelphia.

Donaldson's homer gave Atlanta a 3-0 lead in the fourth. Following Riley's blast, Matt Joyce added a pinch-hit, two-run homer off Juan Nicasio in Atlanta's six-run sixth. Atlanta leads second-place Philadelphia by 5 1/2 games after splitting the first two games of the series. Bryce Harper hit a

line-drive homer to left field in the sixth. It was his 200th career homer and 1,000th career hit. According to the Phillies, it marked the first time in major league history a player reached milestones in hits and homers on the same swing.

PIRATES 6, CUBS 5

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Jung Ho Kang scored on Corey Dickerson's sacrifice fly in the ninth inning to cap a frantic rally and lift Pittsburgh over Chicago. Josh Bell hit his 26th home of the season and fourth of the series and added a double to give him 59 extra-base hits, the most ever by a National League player before the All-Star break. The Cubs turned to recently signed closer Craig Kimbrel (0-1) to protect a one-run lead in the ninth and the Pirates pounced.

The Pirates have won three straight and 12 of 17 to pull within one game of .500 (42-43). Richard Rodriguez (3-3) earned the win after pitching a scoreless ninth.

ASTROS 4, ROCKIES 2

DENVER (AP) — Wade Miley tossed six strong innings and Yuli Gurriel and Alex Bregman homered to lead Houston over Colorado. Miley (7-4) struck out six and retired 11 of the last 12 batters he faced. He walked the first two Rockies he faced but settled down to get out of the inning after Ian Desmond's RBI single. Roberto Osuna pitched the ninth for his 19th save.

Charlie Blackmon had two hits, including an RBI single in the seventh, for Colorado. Rookie right-hander Peter Lambert (2-1) went five innings in his first major league loss.

GIANTS 7, PADRES 5

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Evan Longoria and Alex Dickerson hit consecutive home runs in the third inning and San Francisco scored four runs during an unusual rally in the sixth to beat San Diego for its first three-game sweep of the season.

The Giants were held to single-digits in runs for the first time in four games. They had amassed 33 runs on 44 hits in their previous three games. □



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Trout, Barria and bullpen lead Angels past Rangers 6-2

By The Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) —

Mike Trout homered twice and Jaime Barria, filling the roster spot of the late Tyler Skaggs, struck out a career-high eight batters in five innings as Los Angeles beat Texas. Trout hit a three-run homer in the third inning and a solo shot leading off the sixth. He has hit 24 home runs this season, tied for the American League lead with the New York Yankees' Edwin Encarnación, with eight against Texas.

Barria (3-2) was recalled from Triple-A Salt Lake for his sixth stint with Los Angeles this season. He allowed both runs on four hits and two walks. He has pitched five innings in all three of his Angels starts this season.

The Rangers were shut out over the final four innings by four relievers, limited to four hits overall and have lost four straight games. Ariel Jurado (5-4) gave up all six runs on seven hits and one walk after pitching seven shutout innings against the Detroit Tigers last Thursday.

TWINS 4, ATHLETICS 3, 12 INNINGS

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Mitch Garver hit a go-ahead single with one out in the 12th inning, sending Minnesota past Oakland.

A's closer Blake Treinen (2-3) issued consecutive one-out walks and Byron Buxton hustled home as the Twins won for just the second time in their last six games. Late lineup addition Jorge Polanco hit a tying solo homer in the eighth for the Twins. That marked Minnesota's 161st homer through 85 games, tying the pre-All-Star break record set by the Yankees last year.

Both teams missed chances in the 11th and the A's in the 12th when Jurickson

Profar was tagged out at second. Blake Parker (1-2) worked out of trouble in each of his two innings for the win, striking out three. Taylor Rogers finished the 4-hour, 40-minute game for his 11th save.

BLUE JAYS 6, RED SOX 3

TORONTO (AP) — Danny Jansen and Brandon Drury each hit two-run homers, Lourdes Gurriel Jr. added a solo shot and Toronto beat Boston.

All three homers came off Red Sox left-hander Chris Sale (3-8), who lost for the first time in six starts. It's the second time this season Sale has allowed three homers — he also did it in his opening day outing against Seattle on March 28. Drury went 3 for 4 and came within a triple of the cycle. He singled in the third and doubled in the eighth. Blue Jays right-hander Jacob Waguespack (1-0) allowed three runs and five hits in five-plus innings for his first career win.

INDIANS 4, ROYALS 0

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Mike Clevinger pitched six innings of four-hit ball, Carlos Santana and Roberto Perez went deep, and Cleveland over Kansas City. Clevinger (2-2) struck out nine without a walk in his second start since a balky back forced him into a lengthy stay on the injured list. He struggled in his first game back but dominated the Royals on a picture-perfect night, improving to 7-0 with a 2.03 ERA in his career against them.

Danny Duffy (3-5) kept his command issues at bay long enough to last 6 2-3 innings for Kansas City. The left-hander allowed two runs on five hits, five walks and a hit batter.

ORIOLES 9, RAYS 6



Los Angeles Angels starting pitcher Jaime Barria (51) stands on the mound as Texas Rangers' Tim Federowicz rounds the bases after hitting a solo home run during the fifth inning of a baseball game in Arlington, Texas, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — WHITE SOX 7, TIGERS 5, 1st Game

Renato Nunez hit a three-run homer to complete a six-run ninth inning, and Baltimore held on to beat Tampa Bay.

Nunez's 19th home run came off Jose Alvarado (0-5) after an RBI triple by Jonathan Villar. The blast put the Orioles up 9-3 before Tampa Bay tried to rally in the bottom of the ninth. Shawn Armstrong came in to get the final out with two runners on base and earn his second save.

The Rays had their four-game winning streak snapped. Relief pitcher Mychal Givens (1-4) got his first win since Sept. 24, 2017, after lunging to tag out a sliding Kevin Kiermaier near the plate, preventing the Rays from taking a 4-3 lead in the bottom of the eighth. Givens had lost 11 straight decisions.

WHITE SOX 9, TIGERS 6, 12 Innings, 2nd Game

CHICAGO (AP) — Jose Abreu hit a three-run homer in the 12th inning, Yoan Moncada and Ryan Cordell each went deep twice and Chicago beat Detroit to complete a day-night doubleheader sweep. Abreu's shot to the left-field bullpen capped a wild win for the White Sox, after Dylan Cease went five innings in his debut to lead them to a 7-5 victory in the opener.

Chicago had runners on first and second in the 12th after Nick Ramirez (3-3) walked Zack Collins with one out and Leury Garcia singled. Moncada struck out before Abreu connected on a 3-2 pitch for his second career game-ending homer, giving the White Sox

their fifth win in six games. There was a charged atmosphere for the first game with Cease (1-0) making his debut. The 23-year-old right-hander gave up three runs and four hits. He struck out six and walked four — three during a two-run first in which he also hit a batter.

CARDINALS 5, MARINERS 2

SEATTLE (AP) — Tommy Edman capped St. Louis' big ninth inning with a two-out, three-run homer as the Cardinals rallied for five runs to beat Seattle.

St. Louis entered the ninth trailing 2-0 after a masterful performance from Seattle starter Mike Leake, who threw 7 2/3 shutout innings against his former team for the first time. But Austin Adams (1-1) and Seattle's bullpen imploded and the Cardinals took full advantage of the meltdown. □



United States' Christian Coleman, center, runs toward the finish line to win the men's 100-meter race during the Prefontaine Classic, an IAAF Diamond League athletics meeting, in Stanford, Calif., Sunday, June 30, 2019. Michael Rodgers, left, and Justin Gatlin, also of the United States, also compete.

Associated Press

American sprinters relishing open races in life after Bolt

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) — In the post-Bolt world of sprinting, top American runners are enjoying new rivalries and more open races.

Ahead of their races at the Diamond League meeting known as Athletissima, Justin Gatlin and Noah Lyles spoke Thursday of enjoying duels that were harder to predict.

"I like where the sprints are right now," said Gatlin, whose 100-meter title at the 2017 world championships was Usain Bolt's first loss in an individual gold-medal race for 10 years. "It's not a clear favorite always."

Gatlin has the best time this year among those in the 100 lineup Friday at Lausanne, while Lyles starts favorite in the 200.

"I like how every race is more now getting into a 'Who's going to win?' situation," said Lyles, whose 200 duel against fellow American Michael Norman in Rome a month ago was a highlight of the Diamond League season.

"There's a lot of rivalries coming up, especially in the U.S. It's actually very exciting," said Lyles, who like Norman is 21 and a potential standout at the season-ending world championships in Doha, Qatar.

Lyles and Gatlin were asked who was "the

boss" of the men's sprints in the second season since Bolt's retirement ended almost a decade of his domination across three Olympic Games.

Both gave diplomatic answers, suggesting they enjoy the challenge.

"You got a lot of very talented athletes who are going to step up," said Gatlin, who at age 37 posted 9.87 seconds as runner-up at the Prefontaine Classic in California last weekend to stand fourth in the season-leading list.

The list is led by 23-year-old Christian Coleman's winning time of 9.81 in the Americans' first clash since taking gold and silver ahead of third-place Bolt at the 2017 worlds in London.

Lyles is second in the 100 and 200 world-leading lists this season. In Rome, Norman clocked 19.70, two-hundredths faster than Lyles.

"It's just exciting to see fans coming out and getting excited, choose sides and just watching a race because it's a great race," said Lyles, whose opponents Friday include 2017 world champion Ramil Guliyev of Turkey and Canada's Andre De Grasse, the 2016 Olympic silver medalist behind Bolt. □



Brooks Koepka tees off on the fourth hole during the first round of the 3M Open golf tournament in Blaine, Minn., Thursday, July 4, 2019.

Associated Press

3M Open

Continued from Page 17

Piercy struggled late at the U.S. Open three weeks ago, including a final-round 77, and finished 52nd, but some rest and a tweak to how his driver is weighted produced a satisfying result.

"I put in a few hours Friday, Saturday just to kind of get the rust off," he said.

He hit 13 of 14 fairways and 15 of 18 greens in a round that was interrupted early by a 36-minute weather delay and showers fell briefly a couple of times during the rest of his round. The winds also picked up at times in the afternoon. Playing in the calm morning, Matsuyama and Hadwin found success on the soft greens.

Ranked 93rd on tour, averaging 28.95 putts per round, Matsuyama had 26, including making 13 of 14 from inside 10 feet and four of five from 10 to 15 feet. He did not three-putt a hole.

"I've been trying lots of different things and the stance, the narrow stance, seemed to work today," he said through an interpreter.

Starting on No. 10, Matsuyama, a five-time tour champion who last won at the 2017 Bridgestone Invitational, had four straight birdies around the turn before back-to-back birdies on Nos. 5 and 6. His lone bogey was his final hole.

Playing two groups behind Matsuyama, Hadwin was 3 under through nine holes, and birdied four straight holes among his final nine.

"You prepare for a round like today and you've just got to be ready when it comes," Hadwin said.

He made all 15 putts from inside 10 feet and made two of three from between 20 and 25 feet.

"I had those looks, my speed control was awesome all day and putts went in," he said.

The 3M Open is the first regular tour event in Minnesota since 1969; however, the U.S. Open and PGA Championship have each twice been contested at Hazeltine National Golf Club. The 2016 Ryder Cup was also played there and is to return in 2028.

The tournament replaces a PGA Tour Champions event held in the Land of 10,000 Lakes for 26 years.

"It's a great day for Minnesota golf, for sure," said Tom Lehman, who grew up in the state and helped lead the course renovation.

Arjun Atwal, Brian Harman, Sungjae Im, Patton Kizzire and Sam Saunders are three back after shooting 6-under 65. Brooks Koepka, the world's top-ranked player, is among more than a dozen players that shot a 4-under 67. Nate Lashley, who won last week's Rocket Mortgage Classic in Detroit, finished 2 under.

Phil Mickelson had seven penalty strokes, including two on the par-5 18th, and finished 3 over.

Minnesota native Tim Herron aced the 208-yard eighth hole. □

Kenyan records fastest time on American soil in Atlanta 10K

ATLANTA (AP) — Rhonex Kipruto of Kenya ran a 10-kilometer (6.2-mile) race in Atlanta on Thursday in 27 minutes, 1 second to break the U.S. record in the event.

The 19-year-old surpassed the previous mark of 27:04 set by Joseph Kimani in the same race, the AJC Peachtree Road Race, in 1996. In addition to the first-place prize of \$8,000, Kipruto received a \$50,000 bonus for breaking the event record, which

happened on the 50th anniversary of the race. Sixty-thousand runners were expected to finish. Brigid Kosgei of Kenya won the women's race in 30:22, breaking the event record of 30:32 set by Lornah Kiplagat in 2002 and also receiving a \$50,000 bonus. Bonuses were also awarded to wheelchair champions Daniel Romanchuk of the U.S. (18:11) and Manuela Schar of Switzerland (21:28) for breaking the event records. □

Dutch star Arjen Robben announces retirement from soccer



In this May 25, 2013, file photo, Bayern Munich's Arjen Robben of the Netherlands lifts the trophy after winning the Champions League Final soccer match against Borussia Dortmund at Wembley Stadium in London.

Associated Press

AMSTERDAM (AP) — Former Bayern Munich and Netherlands forward Arjen Robben has announced his retirement from soccer.

The 35-year-old Robben, who was thought to be looking for a new club after playing his last game for Bayern in May, said Thursday in a statement, "I have decided to put an end to my career as a professional football player. It is without a doubt the most difficult decision I have had to make in my career."

Robben, who joined Bayern in 2009 from Real Madrid, played 309 competitive games for the Bavarian powerhouse, contributing 144 goals and setting up 81 more. His crowning moment came in 2013, when he helped Bayern win the treble with the winning goal in the Champions League final against Borussia Dortmund.

Robben signed off with a domestic double despite missing most of last season because of injury. Altogether he helped Bayern to eight Bundesliga wins and five German Cup titles.

Robben also won a league title in 2008 with Madrid in Spain. He helped previous club Chelsea to league titles in 2005 and 2006, and PSV Eindhoven to the Eredivisie title in 2003.

Robben helped the Netherlands reach the 2010 World Cup final, where it lost to Spain. He made 96 appearances for the Dutch team before his international retirement in 2017.

"I was able to play in six major tournaments and was the captain in the final years. All in all an unforgettable time that I will always cherish," Robben said. □



England's Demi Stokes, right, and United States' Carli Lloyd duel for the ball during the Women's World Cup semifinal soccer match between England and the United States, at the Stade de Lyon outside Lyon, France, Tuesday, July 2, 2019.

Associated Press

Lloyd says 2019 U.S. team not a continuation of 2015

By ANNE M. PETERSON
AP Sports Writer

LYON, France (AP) — Carli Lloyd says the success the United States is having at the Women's World Cup in France isn't an extension of the 2015 title run. The so-called 2019ers are their own team.

"We don't really bring up the 2015 World Cup that much because it's done, it's in the past. The focus is just on Sunday," said Lloyd, who was the breakout star in Canada four years ago. The Americans will be vying for their second straight title and fourth overall when they face the Netherlands in the final at Stade de Lyon. More than just having its own identity, this U.S. team is different than those of the past because it has more versatility and depth, Lloyd said.

"Any player that's called upon can step into these roles and play it," she said. "Whereas I think in previous years you had kind of a core squad and some game changers that may come in and make a difference. But we've got a ton of depth on this team, which is fantastic."

The top-ranked U.S. team has already faced — and overcome — two big challenges on the way to the final. First, the Americans

downed No. 4 France 2-1 in the quarterfinals in Paris and they beat No. 3 England 2-1 in the semifinals. The Netherlands, ranked No. 8, had a far easier run on the other side of the bracket, with a 2-0 victory over No. 15 Italy in the quarterfinals and Wednesday night's 1-0 extra-time win over No. 9 Sweden.

The Dutch, who made the World Cup field for the first time in Canada, understand what they're up against.

"They have a really good team. Amazing team. So we have to be ready for the game," defender Stefanie van der Gragt said following the semifinal win. "Now we have a party. Tomorrow we talk about the USA."

Lloyd was the star four years ago in Canada with three goals in the first 16 minutes of a 5-2 final victory over Japan. She has a far different role in France, mostly coming off the bench.

She started in one match, scoring twice in a 3-0 victory over Chile in the group stage. Lloyd celebrated with a golf clap, answering the critics who blasted the U.S. team for enthusiastically celebrating every goal in the 13-0 rout of Thailand in the tournament opener.

The Americans have drawn

attention for their celebrations throughout France, including Megan Rapinoe's "Are You Not Entertained?" pose against France and Alex Morgan's tea sipping versus England. As a result, the players have been branded as brash and even arrogant.

Lloyd brushes the criticism aside.

"I think everybody's just kind of having fun with the celebrations and embracing the moment," she said. Lloyd, who turns 37 next month, is the oldest player on the team and has 280 national team appearances with 113 goals. This is her fourth World Cup.

In addition to her hat trick in Canada, Lloyd scored both goals in the gold-medal match against Japan in the 2012 Olympics. She became the only player to score winning goals in consecutive Olympic finals: At the Beijing Games in 2008, she scored in overtime for a 1-0 victory against Brazil.

In France she's playing off the bench as more of a "super sub" to intimidate opponents and provide fresh legs. Lloyd has been blunt from the beginning that she's not pleased with the new role.

She still feels like she could start and be a difference-maker. □

Server image mystery in Georgia election security case

By FRANK BAJAK

AP Cybersecurity Writer

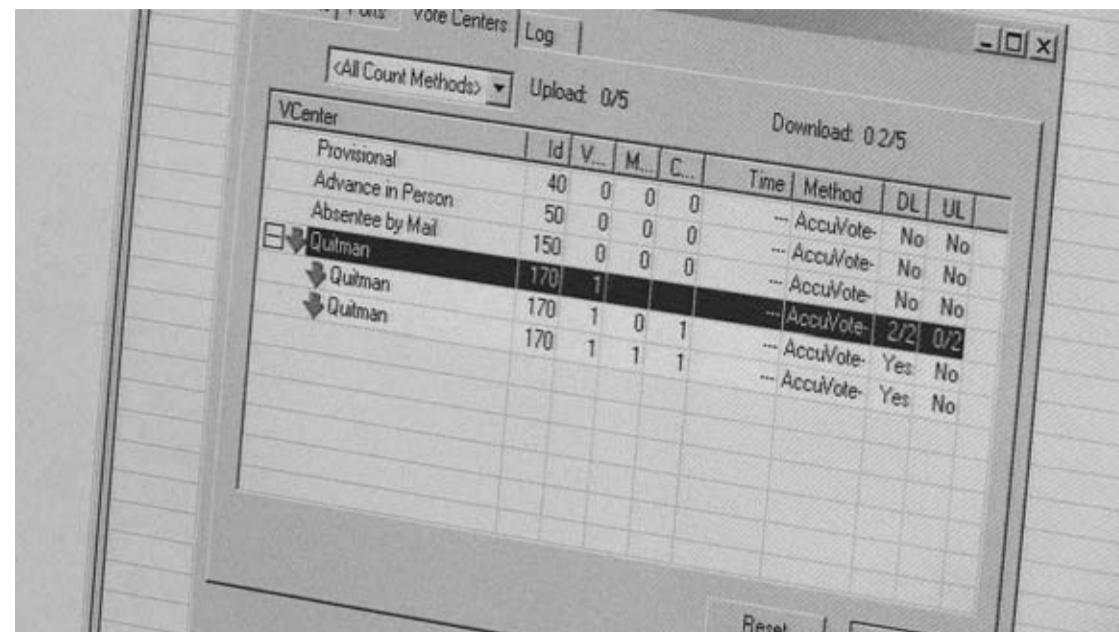
The case of whether hackers may have tampered with elections in Georgia has taken another strange turn.

Nearly two years ago, state lawyers in a closely watched election integrity lawsuit told the judge they intended to subpoena the FBI for the forensic image, or digital snapshot, the agency made of a crucial server before state election officials quietly wiped it clean. Election watchdogs want to examine the data to see if there might have been tampering, given that the server was left exposed by a gaping security hole for more than half a year.

A new email obtained by The Associated Press says state officials never did issue the subpoena, even though the judge had ordered that evidence be preserved, including from the FBI.

The FBI data is central to activists' challenge to Georgia's highly questioned, centrally administered elections system, which lacks an auditable paper trail and was run at the time by Gov. Brian Kemp, then Georgia's secretary of state.

The plaintiffs contend Kemp's handling of the wiped server is the most glaring example of mismanagement that could be hiding evidence of vote tampering. They have



This Sept. 22, 2016 file photo shows the screen of an electronic voting machine during testing at the Kennesaw State University Center for Election Systems in Kennesaw, Ga.

been fighting for access to the state's black-box voting systems and to individual voting machines, many of which they say have also been altered in violation of court order.

Marilyn Marks of the Coalition for Good Governance, a plaintiff in the case, said that if the state failed to secure the data from the FBI — despite informing U.S. District Judge Amy Totenberg in October 2017 of its intent to do so with the subpoena — it clearly has something to hide.

"If they have destroyed records then it can be presumed that those records would have shown our allegations to be true," Marks said.

Neither the Secretary of State's office nor an attorney representing it in the case, Josh Belinfante,

would say why the subpoena was never filed. Nor would they say whether they had obtained the data through other means for secure safekeeping. The FBI in Atlanta also wouldn't say whether it has provided the state with a copy.

In response to a query from an attorney for the plaintiffs, Belinfante wrote in a June 27 email obtained by The Associated Press that "while a subpoena was contemplated by prior counsel, it was never sent." In a statement Tuesday evening, Georgia's deputy secretary of state, Jordan Fuchs, called any accusation that her office has not complied with a court order "completely false," but refused further comment.

The FBI data could reveal whether hackers tampered with elections in Georgia

because the server in question had a gaping security hole that went unpatched for more than six months before being publicly exposed. Data on the server included passwords used by county officials to access elections management files.

Technicians at the Center for Elections Systems at Kennesaw State University, which then ran the state's election system, erased the server's data on July 7, 2017, less than a week after the voting integrity suit was filed.

After the AP reported on it three months later, Kemp denied ordering the data destruction or knowing about it in advance and called it reckless, inexcusable and inept.

But the FBI had a forensic backup, which it made in

March 2017 when it investigated the security hole. The FBI has not responded to repeated requests by the AP to confirm that it continues to possess the data. FBI Atlanta spokeswoman Jenna Sellitto wouldn't say whether the FBI has examined the data on that image to determine whether any tampering or other malicious activity occurred.

The election integrity lawsuit, which entered the evidence-gathering phase in May, aims to force Georgia to immediately replace its outdated electronic touch-screen election technology with a trustworthy system with auditable paper ballots.

Under a new law signed by Kemp, Georgia plans to buy a voting system by year's end that uses electronic ballot-marking devices. Plaintiffs reject those devices as inadequate to guarantee reliable audits and recounts.

Kemp has also been accused of voter suppression. State election officials are also defendants in a lawsuit filed by an organization founded by Stacey Abrams, the Democrat he narrowly defeated last year. It claims they mismanaged the November 2018 election in ways that deprived minorities of their right to vote.

Malfunctioning voting machines and long lines in districts with large minority populations are among problems it cites. Kemp denies the accusation. □



Staff monitor game data and work on match analysis at an operations room during the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

Associated Press

Wimbledon reworks AI tech to reduce bias in game highlights

By KELVIN CHAN

AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — Efforts to make artificial intelligence fairer now extend to Wimbledon's courts.

The All England Club, which hosts the famed British tennis event, is adding technology enhancements at this year's tournament aimed at eliminating bias from computer generated video highlights.

The club has already been using AI to go through hours

of footage and automatically pick out the best shots from matches played on its 18 courts.

The AI chooses the moments based on criteria including whether a player does a fist pump and how much the audience cheers after a point.

Fans can then watch the assembled videos online and players can use them to review their performance.

For this year's tournament,

which runs until July 19, the AI has been tweaked to balance out any favoritism shown to a player who gestures more or has a louder fan base. The goal is to make sure an equally skilled yet more reserved opponent gets similar exposure.

"Just because you don't pump your fist doesn't mean it's not a good shot," said Sam Seddon, a client executive at IBM, the club's technology provider. □

5 good times to shop for almost anything

By COURTNEY JESPERSEN

NerdWallet

Associated Press

There's a best time to buy just about anything, but knowing which product will go on sale at what time isn't always easy.

So here's a list of general shopping rules that can apply to most things you'll buy. With these tips, you can figure out the best time — or at least a good time — to purchase almost anything. Below are five great times to shop.

1. THURSDAYS

Shopping at a brick-and-mortar store on a Thursday afternoon or evening can be cost-effective. This one isn't a guarantee every time, but it's a good bet, according to Kristen Regine, a professor of marketing at Johnson & Wales University in Rhode Island who holds a doctorate in business administration.

"Thursday is an important day for consumers to know because that's when stores take markdowns," Regine says. "They're prepping for the weekend. They know they're going to get the most foot traffic on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays."

2. HOLIDAY WEEKENDS

In some cases, Mondays are better. Expect big deals on weekends leading up to holidays, says Darrin Duber-



In this Nov. 23, 2018, file photo shoppers browse the aisles during a Black Friday sale at a Target store in Newport, Ky.

Smith, a senior lecturer of marketing at Metropolitan State University of Denver. That can apply to a wide array of products, but particularly big-ticket items like cars. "A three-day weekend is always great for buying," Duber-Smith says. "That's just a general rule. When there's a day off — a Monday off — that is a big deal because it's three days of buying instead of two." Popular sale weekends include Presidents Day in February, Memorial Day in May and Labor Day

in September.

3. CLEARANCE EVENTS

A key to shopping is buying products when retailers are liquidating them and moving them to the clearance rack. After all, stores have to run out of the old stuff before they can stock the new stuff.

For example, furniture is typically restocked twice a year — February and August — according to Duber-Smith. That means older furniture styles are usually on sale in January in July.

"Inventory is the bane of all

ance after the color didn't resonate with consumers or sell well.

4. SAME TIME AS LAST YEAR

If you can't remember when these types of sale events will roll around, the deals retailers have hosted in the past are usually a good indication of deals they'll host in the future.

Regine points out that Sephora has a big makeup sale each May, Old Navy has a flip-flop sale each June and Amazon hosts its Prime Day sale each July. Other retailers, such as Bath & Body Works, host semi-annual sales. These twice-yearly sales are typically held in January and June, although the exact timing varies.

To learn about these sales, Regine suggests asking a store sales associate about current and upcoming promotions. Online, keep old retail emails in your inbox so you can track sales and anticipate when they'll happen again.

Holding onto those marketing emails can also help you compare current prices with prices the store has offered in the past so you can better judge the value of a deal. That 20% off site-wide might not be as enticing if you saw the same retailer offer 30% off sitewide last month. □

With US closed, global markets tread water ahead of payrolls

By The Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Global stock markets traded in narrow ranges on Thursday, a day after major U.S. indexes hit record highs in a pre-Independence Day rally amid ongoing hopes over an easing of trade tensions between the U.S.

and China. With Wall Street trading closed for the July 4 holiday, investors will be looking ahead to the U.S. government's closely watched monthly jobs report on Friday. The markets expect a solid 165,000 increase in non-farm payrolls. The outcome will likely be

a factor in the Federal Reserve's meeting this month. The central bank has already said it is prepared to cut rates to shore up the U.S. economy if trade disputes crimp growth.

"The tranquility is unlikely to last, with tomorrow's non-farm payroll almost bound to inject volatility back into the markets," said Fiona Cincotta, senior market analyst at City Index.

In Europe, Germany's DAX closed up 0.1% at 12,629.90, while the CAC 40 in France was roughly flat at 5,620.73. Britain's FTSE 100 closed down 0.1% at 7,603.58.

Earlier in Asia, Japan's Nikkei 225 index added 0.3% to 21,702.45 and South Korea's Kospi rebounded, gaining 0.5% to 2,108.73.

The S&P ASX 200 in Australia rose 0.6% to 6,718.00. The Shanghai Composite index gave up earlier gains, slipping 0.3% to 3,005.25. In Hong Kong, the Hang Seng shed 0.2% lower to 28,795.77. India's Sensex added 0.2% to 39,901.45.

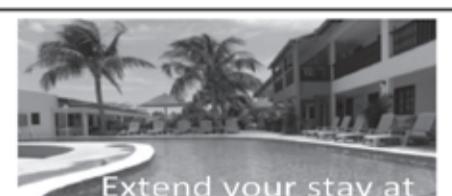
Whatever materializes on the jobs front, the main

driver for markets over the coming weeks will be what happens on the trade front. Last weekend's agreement by U.S. President Donald Trump and China's Xi Jinping to refrain from new tariffs pending a new round of negotiations has relieved some pressure on markets. □



Currency traders watch monitors at the foreign exchange dealing room of the KEB Hana Bank headquarters in Seoul, South Korea, Thursday, July 4, 2019.

Associated Press



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6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 7 | 4 | | 3 |
| | | | 7 | | |
| 4 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 8 | |
| | | | 5 | 5 | |
| 5 | | | | 4 | |
| | 9 | | 5 | | |
| 4 | | 1 | 6 | 3 | 7 |
| | | 6 | | | |
| 8 | | | 5 | 2 | 4 |

Difficulty Level ★★★★

7/05

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 9 | 1 |
| 1 | 9 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 8 | 5 |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 7 |
| 3 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 9 |
| 8 | 2 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 3 |
| 4 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 8 |
| 9 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| 2 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 7 | 6 |
| 7 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 2 |

Yesterday's puzzle answer



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

7/19

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| H | E | R | D | U | L | T | R | A | C | H |
| I | C | E | D | P | A | R | E | L | U | A |
| T | H | E | | P | R | E | V | A | I | L |
| S | O | D | F | I | R | E | L | I | N | S |
| U | N | I | C | E | Y | D | I | E | | |
| O | R | A | T | E | B | E | A | S | T | S |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | | |
| 13 | | 14 | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | | | 17 | | | | 18 | | | |
| 19 | | 20 | | | | 21 | | | | |
| 22 | 23 | | | | | 24 | | | | |
| 25 | 26 | | | | | 27 | | 28 | 29 | |
| 30 | | | 31 | 32 | | | 33 | | 34 | |
| 35 | | 36 | | | | 37 | | | | |
| 38 | | 39 | | | 40 | | | | | |
| 41 | 42 | | | | 43 | | | | | |
| 44 | | | 45 | | | | | | | |
| 46 | 47 | 48 | | 49 | 50 | | 51 | 52 | 53 | |
| 54 | | | 55 | | | 56 | | | | |
| 57 | | | 58 | | | 59 | | | | |
| 60 | | | 61 | | | 62 | | | | |

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7/19

- 4 Have ambitions
5 "I've got ___ that jingle jangle jingle..."
6 Lean to one side
7 Covetousness
8 Actress Charlotte
9 Grins
10 Leak out
11 Above
12 Robin's home
13 Plato's "T"
18 AM/FM device
20 Computer input
23 British nobleman
24 Popular pets
25 Kick out
26 Farm machines
27 Cure
28 Colossal
29 Bridal dress fabric
31 Root beer brand
32 ___ heartbeat; instantly
34 Treaty
36 Actor Johnny National Forest
37 Emery board
- 48 "First ___ first served"
49 Journey
50 Metal thread
52 Inscribe
53 "Be quiet!"
55 O'Neill & McMahon
56 Feathery scarf
- 39 Mary Tyler ___
40 Created
42 Can ___; small appliance
43 Colored slightly
45 Pig out
46 "When You Wish ___ a Star"
47 Board game



In this Dec. 7, 2016, file photo, a green iguana checks out the flowers on a Bougainvillea plant in Hollywood, Fla.

Associated Press

Reptile invasion: Florida agency encourages killing iguanas

By CURT ANDERSON

Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla.

(AP) — Non-native iguanas are multiplying so rapidly in South Florida that a state wildlife agency is now encouraging people to kill them. A Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission news release says people should exterminate the large green lizards on their properties as well as on 22 public land areas across South Florida. It doesn't say just how civilians should try to kill them. "Homeowners do not need a permit to kill iguanas on their own property, and the FWC encourages homeowners to kill green iguanas on their own property whenever possible," the agency says. Iguanas aren't dangerous or aggressive to humans, but they damage seawalls, sidewalks, landscape foliage and can dig lengthy tunnels. The males can grow to at least 5 feet (1.5 meters) long and weigh nearly 20 pounds (9 kilograms). The commission says female iguanas can lay nearly 80 eggs a year and South Florida's warm climate is perfect for the prehistoric-looking animals. Iguanas are native to Central America, tropical parts of South America and some Caribbean islands.

"Some green iguanas cause damage to infrastructure by digging burrows that erode and collapse sidewalks, foundations, seawalls, berms and canal banks. Green iguanas may also leave droppings on docks, moored boats, seawalls, porches, decks, pool platforms and inside swimming pools," the wildlife commission says. They also can carry salmonella bacteria. □

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Map showing the location of Aruba Today and Bondia offices in downtown Willemstad. Key locations labeled include: Bus terminal, Weststraat, Schepstraat, Royal Plaza Mall, L.G. Smith Boulevard, Caya G.F. Belisca Cross, Caya G.J., and High Rose Hotel. The office is located on Weststraat.

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*WK. 51 GV \$39k

*WK 52 OV \$46k

* Weeks 7 and 14-all views

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General Info

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Arctic mission will trap scientists in ice to study climate

By FRANK JORDANS

Associated Press

BREMERHAVEN, Germany

(AP) — Cranes hoist cargo onto the deck, power tools scream out and workers bustle through the maze of passageways inside the German icebreaker RV Polarstern, preparations for a yearlong voyage that organizers say is unprecedented in scale and ambition.

In a couple of months, the hulking ship will set out for the Arctic packed with supplies and scientific equipment for a mission to explore the planet's frigid far north. The icebreaker will be the base for scientists from 17 nations studying the impact of climate change on the Arctic and how it could affect the rest of the world.

"So far we have always been locked out of that region and we lack even the basic observations of the climate processes in the central Arctic from winter," said Markus Rex of Germany's Alfred Wegener Institute, who will lead the 140-million euro (\$158 million) expedition.

"We are going to change that for the first time," Rex told The Associated Press in an interview Wednesday aboard the Polarstern at its dock in Bremerhaven, Germany.

Scientists plan to sail the ship into the Arctic Ocean, anchor it to a large piece of sea ice and allow the water to freeze around them, effectively trapping themselves in the vast sheet of white that forms over the North Pole each winter.

As temperatures drop and the days get shorter, they'll race against time to build temporary winter research camps on the ice, allowing them to perform tests that



The German Arctic research vessel Polarstern is docked for maintenance in Bremerhaven, Germany, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

wouldn't be possible at other times of the year or by satellite sensing.

"We can do a lot with robotics and other things but in the end the visual, the manual observation and also the measurement, that's still what we need," Marcel Nicolaus, a German sea ice physicist who will be part of the international mission, said. "We need to go out, establish that ice camp."

Dozens of scientists from the United States, China, Russia and other countries will be on board the Polarstern at any one time, rotating every two months as other icebreakers bring fresh supplies and a new batch of eager researchers.

The mission is considered a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for many scientists, even those who are veterans of multiple Arctic expeditions.

It is receiving substantial funding from U.S. institutions such as the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy, the

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and NASA.

By combining measurements on the ice with data collected from satellites, scientists hope to improve the increasingly sophisticated computer models they use to predict weather and climate.

The interdisciplinary work spans several fields of science, including physics, chemistry and biology.

Its overarching purpose — to answer key questions

Associated Press

around global warming — means there's no time for national rivalry, said Rex.

"The different geopolitical interests don't play a role in our research community," he said.

The mission's international collaboration and scope have drawn comparisons with the International Space Station, the most expensive and remote outpost mankind has yet created.

"Actually, we'll be farther away from civilization be-

cause the space station is in an orbit only 400 to 500 kilometers high," Rex said. Once the Polarstern is carried into the depth of the Arctic night, far off the coast of northern Greenland, the scientists will be on their own, making any emergency evacuation almost impossible.

"We'll be isolated," Rex said. "No other ice breaker can then reach us because the ice will be too thick."

While the ship has a fully equipped medical station, the aim is to avoid any calamity on board, said Verena Mohaupt, a logistics expert who has spent months preparing safety measures for the mission.

This includes creating a perimeter fence on the ice that will sound a loud alarm if a polar bear approaches. "We're going to have to experiment and hope it works," said Mohaupt.

The MOSAiC mission, which stands for Multidisciplinary drifting Observatory for the Study of Arctic Climate, comes about 125 years after Norwegian explorer Fridtjof Nansen first managed to seal his wooden expedition ship, Fram, into the ice during a three-year expedition to the North Pole. □

New study suggests seaweed influx will continue in Florida

MIAMI (AP) — The clumps of brown seaweed that smell like rotten eggs and are causing disruptions along Florida's Atlantic beaches won't be going away anytime soon, a new study released Thursday has found.

The University of South Florida report suggests the pungent, slimy seaweed, known as sargassum, is on track to continue to be just as bad for coastal regions as in the past. The university's team, which includes Mengqiu Wang, discovered in satellite images that areas of this type of seaweed stretched across surface waters from West Africa to the Gulf of Mexico. They estimated that it weighed more than 20 million tons.

"The oceans are connected across the regions and we are going to see more sargassum coming to the Florida coast," Wang said. "It is not fatal, it is not poisoning tides; it is more of a public nuisance and can cause some public health concerns."

The study says sargassum, which turns clear sea water brown, has been an issue since 2011. Apart from 2013, each year the seaweed returned in larger quantities on beaches throughout the Caribbean and Mexico. Some places, such as Miami Beach, have had so much sargassum at times that swimmers are blocked from entering the water.

The thick seaweed also releases hydrogen sulfide gas that smells like rotten eggs, which can cause problems for those with respiratory issues.

Donald Johnson, a senior research scientist on ocean circulation at the University of Southern Mississippi, said satellite usage is one of the only ways to capture the enormous scale of sargassum.

Wang said that climate change also played a role. Rising seawaters and an increase in nutrients from river sources, such as the Amazon River, make its way to the sea, causing the sargassum to increase in growth. □

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Kacey Musgraves' museum exhibit allows her time to reflect

By KRISTIN M. HALL

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) —

Kacey Musgraves' career has been moving and changing fast over the last couple of years, leaving little time for reflection until she saw her life chronicled behind museum glass.

Musgraves is the subject of a new exhibit at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum that opens Tuesday and runs through June 2020. The exhibit follows the critically acclaimed "Golden Hour" in 2018 that earned Musgraves four Grammys this year including country album of the year and album of the year, beating fellow nominees Drake, Cardi B and Brandi Carlile.

"I think a lot of people that night were like, 'Who is this girl?'" Musgraves said.

"Which is a funny conundrum to be winning album of the year, and to have people saying, 'Who are you?' But in a way, I kind of love that."

The exhibit called "Kacey Musgraves: All of the Colors" comes as the 30-year-old Texas singer has blossomed into a cross-genre star whose emotional and clever lyrics and inventive style, blending country with electronic, disco and spacy pop sounds has earned her plenty of new fans.



This July 1, 2019 photo shows country singer Kacey Musgraves posing in front of her new exhibit, "Kacey Musgraves: All of the Colors," at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Nashville, Tenn.

"Too often I can just speed onto the next thing without really soaking in what just happened," Musgraves told The Associated Press after seeing her memorabilia on display for the first time Monday evening. "It really did hit me in an emotional way and I didn't think it would."

The exhibit starts with photos of Musgraves as a child performer singing and yodeling classic Western songs and dressed in jeans

and cowboy hats, through her early years in Nashville as a songwriter penning songs with Miranda Lambert and to her Grammy-winning major-label debut album in 2013, "Same Trailer, Different Park." Early in her career, Musgraves established herself as a unique artist willing to challenge radio programmers with songs like "Merry Go 'Round" — which won a Grammy award for best country song in 2014 — and

Associated Press

"Follow Your Arrow," song of the year winner at the 2014 Country Music Association Awards.

Musgraves has also become one of modern country music's new style icons, mixing country and Western embellishments into her red carpet outfits, stage wear and music videos. The exhibit features a rhinestone studded dress designed by Enrique Urbina for the 2014 Grammys and a Western-inspired black

pantsuit designed by Atelier Versace that she wore at the 2018 CMA Awards. The exhibit has her Moschino Barbie-inspired pink leather outfit complete with a blonde wig from the 2019 Met Gala that Jeremy Scott helped design.

"I didn't grow up with anything designer ever, not once. Nothing luxurious like that of any kind," Musgraves said. "There's also this other side of me that is like really enthralled with all of that."

Musgraves' stylist Erica Cloud said the singer's style is a mix of nostalgia and playfulness.

"Kacey's style is unique because she stays grounded in her roots & is classic but we add playful, elevated elements to keep it current," Cloud said in a statement. "She's nostalgia with a modern twist. She's relatable meets inspirational."

Lyrics that she wrote with Lambert, Shane McAnally, Ian Fitchuk and Daniel Tashian are interspersed between the awards and outfits, alongside a letter she wrote to one of her songwriting heroes, John Prine.

"I love that you can pretty much dress anyway you want, but if you strip it away and there are real songs there, that's what matters to me," Musgraves said. □

Hip-hop star Nicki Minaj to perform in Saudi Arabia

By AYA BATRAWY

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) —

Saudi Arabia said Wednesday that hip-hop star Nicki Minaj will perform in the ultraconservative kingdom as it sheds decades of restrictions on entertainment.

The female rapper is known for her outlandish, provocative style and hits like "Anaconda," where she raps about her "big fat" back-side. Her lyrics are often laced with profanities and her skin-bearing music videos often include twerking. Christian groups criticized her 2012 Grammy Awards performance, which included dancing priests and an exorcism. Saudi organiza-



In this Sunday, Nov. 4, 2018 file photo, Nicki Minaj performs on stage during the MTV EMA's 2018 at Bilbao Exhibition Centre in Bilbao, Spain.

Associated Press

ers announced she would be the headline act at the Jeddah World Fest on July 18. The concert, which in line with Saudi laws is alcohol and drug-free, is open

to criticism and disappointment. In a profanity-laced video posted on Twitter and viewed more than 37,000 times, a Saudi woman wearing a loose headscarf accuses the Saudi government of hypocrisy for inviting Minaj to perform but requiring women who attend the concert to wear the modest full-length robe known as the abaya. Most Saudi women also veil their hair and faces.

"She's going to go and shake her ass and all her songs are indecent and about sex and shaking ass and then you tell me to wear the abaya," the Saudi woman says. "What the hell?" Saudi organizers said the concert will be broad-

cast globally and covered by MTV. Other performers include British artist Liam Payne and American DJ Steve Aoki. The kingdom is also promising quick electronic visas for international visitors who want to attend. Over the past several months, the kingdom has seen performances by Mariah Carey, Enrique Iglesias, the Black Eyed Peas, rapper Sean Paul, and DJs David Guetta and Tiësto. That's despite the widespread international backlash since October over the killing of Saudi critic and writer Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi agents close to the crown prince in the kingdom's consulate in Turkey. □

The newcomers behind 'The Last Black Man in San Francisco'

By LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — It's an unusually chilly and overcast Sunday in Los Angeles when the San Francisco filmmaking team and long-time friends Jimmie Fails and Joe Talbot meet for a rooftop brunch a few days after their hometown premiere of "The Last Black Man in San Francisco."

"It's like it knew we were coming," Fails laughed.

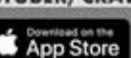
Despite the knit cap on his head, the T-shirt clad writer and star clearly wasn't expecting the gloomy weather. Thankfully Talbot was there to save the day, offering his friend his grandmother's houndstooth jacket off his back, which Fails ended up wearing as a blanket after attempting to squeeze his arms into the small coat.

But the Northern California chill was perhaps the ideal



This photo provided by A24 shows Jimmie Fails, left, who stars as Jimmie Fails and Jonathan Majors, right, as Montgomery Allen in "The Last Black Man in San Francisco", an A24 release.

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than they realized. Talbot would direct, and Fails would star as his own alter-ego, also named Jimmie Fails. They had most of their crew in place too: A lot of San Francisco friends they'd worked with before who knew the city and were ready to commit as fully as Talbot and Fails to this passion project. For Jimmie's best friend, Mont, they found actor Jonathan Majors — another revelation who is just starting to make a name for himself in the business.

"I was the last piece to kind of come in," Majors said, who was still able to weigh in on and tweak his character. "The collaboration was beautiful. We're rallying behind humanity in this piece, you know, and it's deep...This is man versus society and it's a heavy role to play."

They also got San Francisco-native Danny Glover to the role of Mont's blind grandfather.

"It was important to get as many San Franciscans as we could," Fails said. "We're doing this for the city. We don't want it to feel inauthentic."

The response from the local community has already been more than they could have imagined. They've also already made quite an impact in Hollywood, with both having signed with power agency CAA. But at the moment, they're just thinking about this film they made together. And both are still riding high from the San Francisco premiere at The Castro.

"That was one of the best nights ever in San Francisco," Fails said. "They say it's 6% natives left and I feel like they were all at the premiere."

Talbot added: "We talk a lot about our fears of what San Francisco is becoming. And to have that event at this old cinema palace that we all grew up going to and see packed to the brim with almost entirely natives all in one space felt like a celebration of San Francisco in a way that left us both feeling inspired for the future of the city." □

setting. After all, "The Last Black Man in San Francisco" isn't exactly a 72 and sunny kind of movie.

It's a beautiful, poetic story about family, gentrification and the meaning of home and ownership from the minds of two total newcomers that has captivated the film world. Now playing in limited release, "The Last Black Man in San Francisco" is expanding this weekend and next.

The film is the culmination of over five years of work for Fails, 24, and Talbot, 28, who met as teens in the public park that separated their neighborhood, discovered a shared love of film and filmmaking and "haven't stopped talking since."

But while both knew they wanted to make films, they didn't have any useful or current connections (Talbot's grandfather, Lyle Talbot, was a B-movie actor in the '30s and '40s, and, later the films of Ed Wood). Neither went to film school. Fails left college after his first year, Talbot dropped out of high school and the San Francisco filmmaking scene wasn't as vibrant or accommodating to indie newcomers as it had been in the past. In an attempt to get some sort of advice, Talbot cold-emailed filmmaker Barry Jenkins, who at the time had only made "Medicine for Melancholy," asking for advice on how to start.

Jenkins told them what he

Gaultier goes fur-free as Saab channels Asian couture

By THOMAS ADAMSON

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Fake fur and authentic celebrities got all the attention at Jean Paul Gaultier's fall-winter collection, while Elie's Saab couture reached creative heights by channeling Chinese mysticism during the final day of fall-winter 2019 couture displays.

Here are some of Wednesday's highlights:

JEAN PAUL GAULTIER FAKES IT

In a corseted gown, singer Christina Aguilera held court at Gaultier's fur-themed, fur-less show with "RuPaul's Drag Race" stars Violet Chachki and Miss Fame, as well as French cinema icon Catherine Deneuve. Last November, animal rights groups hailed Gaultier's announcement that he is joining the growing ranks of designers to ban fur from their collections. Gaultier used this as a muse for a playful fall-winter collection that used feathers to mimic real fur on 1980s-themed looks with a funky retro soundtrack and flashes of bright color. An oversize Russian winter fur hat, or chapka, looked initially like the genuine article and shimmered alongside a red "fox" bubble jacket. They were, so said



A model wears a creation for Elie Saab Haute Couture Fall-Winter 2019-2020 fashion collection presented, Wednesday, July 3, 2019 in Paris.

the program notes, all constructed in marabou feathers. Leopard print graced a billowing chiffon gown, geometric zebra stripes jazzed up diaphanous pant look, and all this was followed by a "panther" coat with oversize collar that was made with jacquard. A blood red silk coat, which was the strongest look in an excessively theatrical display, opened up with its wide collar as if to evoke a carcass cut open, albeit in a very elegant way.

GAULTIER HAS HUMOROUS PROGRAM NOTES

Gaultier's program notes have become legendary over the years. Each season, guests pour over the house cards that humorously detail the couture looks with tongue-in-cheek word plays and rhyming puns. "Downtown Abyss," "Black Panther," "Grey of Thrones" and "Mein Hair" were among some of the quirky couture look titles in this season's lot — all the work of wordsmith Raphael

Ciotti. Ciotti, a 36-year-old screen and stage writer who co-wrote the Gaultier "Fashion Freak Show" musical, says he has been penning the couture notes for several years after first meeting the humor-loving designer during a television show a decade ago. "He realized we had exactly the same sense of humor and so asked me to write his program notes. He just tells me the show theme and then (I) have free creative rein," Ciotti told The Associated Press.

ated Press. "I try to make as many jokes as possible in each look."

ELIE SAAB'S ASIA

Amid mysterious clouds of Persian blue mist, Elie Saab fashioned up a stand-out couture collection Wednesday using the symbolism of China.

The Lebanese designer reimagined traditional Chinese drawings through embroideries with sequins, paillettes and sparkle that depicted fauna and flora; elements, the house said, that represent powerful protective spirits in Eastern legend. "Nature, through mystical creatures and divine characters, sparked the curiosity of the designer, inspiring him to translate them into his very own art," it added. Long diaphanous tulle, velvet and chiffon trains brought a magical romance to Saab's bread-and-butter silhouette of sexy, cinched waist gowns. Models with decorated tiaras walked to Asian traditional music.

There was some sophisticated and thoughtful fashion designs amid the show production — for instance, the famed Chinese traditional dress, the Cheongsam, was reimagined in a light tuxedo-style with a provocatively open bust. □

A rich mystery awaits in S.J. Rozan's 'Paper Son'

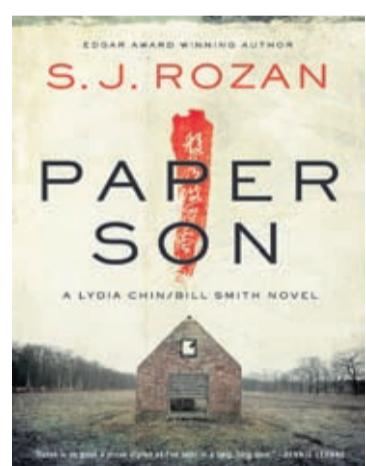
By OLIVE H. COGDILL

Associated Press

"Paper Son" by S.J. Rozan (Pegasus Books)

S.J. Rozan's affinity for little known facts about Chinese culture has fueled exciting thrillers featuring private detectives Lydia Chin and Bill Smith. Memorable plots include a Jewish settlement in China comprised of refugees fleeing Nazi Germany ("The Shanghai Moon"), political art ("Ghost Hero") and restaurant workers' union ("A Bitter Feast").

In the outstanding "Paper Son," Rozan uses the history of Chinese immigrants who established regular grocery stores serving predominantly black neighborhoods in the Mississippi Delta during the early 20th century to



This cover image released by Pegasus shows "Paper Son," a novel by S.J. Rozan.

Associated Press

sculpt a story about family, culture, prejudice and community. These businesses took hold because the Chinese laborers' jobs building the railroads dried up and white grocers who

would not sell to black residents. Lydia, a Chinese American who lives with her traditional mother in New York's Chinatown, had never heard of Chinese grocers nor did she know that she had relatives living in Mississippi until a tragedy happens. Her 23-year-old cousin, Jefferson Tam, has been arrested for the murder of his grocer father, Leland. Despite the strong evidence, Lydia's mother refuses to believe any relative — no matter how distant — could be a murderer. She wants Lydia and Bill to go to Clarksdale, Mississippi, to prove Jefferson's innocence. That alone is a revelation since Lydia's mother has never approved of her profession

and has even less regard for Bill, who is white.

With Jefferson's uncle, Capt. Pete Tam, as their guide, Lydia and Bill maneuver through the morass of bigotry and an economically depressed community overwhelmed with drugs. Although the Tams have lived in Clarksdale for generations, the family still is disconnected from the rest of the town. However, those family members who moved away to larger cities have a different experience, including Reynold Tam, whose father married a white woman and who is running for governor of Mississippi.

Chinese families are complicated, as Lydia explains to Bill. While these people

are distant relatives, they are still family. Adding to the tangled family tree are those men who are "paper sons" — immigrants who convinced naturalized Chinese Americans to file papers identifying them as a son. In some cases, these "sons" had never met their "fathers." A bit of money helped. Lydia and Bill were last seen in 2011's "Ghost Hero," but Rozan's intricate plotting and affinity for characterization is seamless, making the reader remember how much we missed spending time with these private detectives. Rozan uses the historical footnote of Chinese grocers as a springboard for a rich, deeply satisfying mystery. □

3-D printing recreates ancient sculpture destroyed by ISIS

By JILL LAWLESS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — A figure of a roaring lion, about the size of a loaf of bread, is the latest step in the fight to preserve culture from conflict.

The sculpture is a replica of a colossal 3,000-year-old statue from the Temple of Ishtar in Nimrud, in what's now Iraq. The stone statue was one of many artifacts from the Mosul Museum destroyed by the Islamic State group after it overran the city in 2014.

The replica Lion of Mosul, which can be viewed online, was modelled from crowd-sourced photos taken by Mosul Museum visitors in happier times and 3-D printed as part of Google's digital arts and culture project.

It's going on display at London's Imperial War Museum in an exhibition that looks at how war devastates societies' cultural fabric — and at the ingenious and often heroic steps taken to preserve it.

Chance Coughenour, digital archaeologist at Google Arts and Culture, said the exhibition "highlights the potential of technology — both in terms of digitally preserving culture and telling these amazing stories in engaging new ways."

It also illustrates a grim truth: culture has long been a casualty of conflict. Museums, monuments and even music are often deliberately targeted by combatants.



Part of the 'Rebel Sounds' exhibition, which explores how people used music to resist and rebel against war and oppression, is displayed at the Imperial War Museum in London, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

"The destruction of culture is sort of an accepted sideline to war," Imperial War Museum curator Paris Agar said Wednesday. "One of the main reasons for destroying culture is to send a message: We have victory over you. We have power over you. It's because culture means so much to us; if we didn't care it wouldn't be a tool."

The horror that rippled around the world in April at the sight of Paris's Notre Dame cathedral in flames is proof of the powerful attachment we have to buildings and artworks.

The most shocking parts of the exhibition are the records made by the destroyers: meticulous Nazi

lists of artworks they'd stolen; video of the Taliban blowing up Afghanistan's 1,000-year-old Bamiyan Buddhas; footage of IS militants methodically sledgehammering statues in the Mosul museum.

The show covers a century of destruction, from the German army's World War I destruction of the university and library of Louvain, Belgium to the shelling of the National and University Library in Sarajevo during the Bosnian war in 1992.

The 1940 devastation of England's Coventry Cathedral by Germany's Luftwaffe is shown alongside the destruction of the Frauenkirche in Dresden by Allied bombing in 1945.

Both were later rebuilt, in very different ways: Coventry with a modern cathedral beside the ruins of the old, Dresden brick by brick from the original plans.

Images of destruction sit alongside stories of resistance and rescue. The show features the work of the World War II Monuments Men, who saved Nazi-looted artworks, and tells the story of Khaled al-Asaad, a scholar who devoted his life to studying Syria's ancient site of Palmyra and was murdered by IS in 2015.

Some militaries have made efforts to prevent looting and destruction. The British Army recently set up a Cultural Property Protection Unit — modern-day monuments men and women — and the exhibition includes

a pack of "archaeology awareness playing cards" distributed to U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Internationally backed projects to train craftspeople and archaeologists in Syria and Iraq may help those countries recreate what has been lost. And the law has made small steps toward bringing cultural vandals to justice. In 2016, Islamic extremist Ahmad Al Faqi Al Mahdi was convicted of destroying World Heritage cultural sites in Timbuktu, Mali — the first war-crimes conviction by the International Criminal Court for cultural destruction.

"It has always been part of warfare," Agar said. "All that has changed in recent years is the awareness and attempt to stop it."

The display is one of three linked exhibitions at the museum under the heading Culture Under Attack. The second looks at how British museums evacuated their treasures from London to keep them safe during World War II — and what they left behind. The third, Rebel Sounds, explores music as resistance, focusing on clandestine jazz fans in Nazi Germany, punks fighting for the right to party during Northern Ireland's violent "Troubles," a Belgrade radio station that championed free speech and Serbian techno in the war-torn 1990s, and musicians from Mali who defied an Islamist ban on music.

Culture Under Attack opens Friday and runs to January 5. Admission is free. □



A 3D printed recreation of the ancient Lion of Mosul, which was destroyed by the Islamic State group at the Mosul Museum in Iraq, is displayed as part of the 'What Remains' exhibition at the Imperial War Museum in London, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

Associated Press



A 3D printed 2015 recreation titled 'Unknown King of Haar' by Morehshin Allahyari is displayed as part of the 'What Remains' exhibition at the Imperial War Museum in London, Wednesday, July 3, 2019.

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